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INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

A RETROSPECT

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Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi.
Printed by the Government of India Press, Calcutta, India,
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PREFACE

The Indian Historical Records Commission, which holds its Silver Jubilee Session this year, is the national organisation of individuals and institutions engaged in the study, upkeep and preservation of records and historical manuscripts. In the pages which follow a sketch of its history is given from its foundation down to the present day. It is hoped that this sketch will be useful not only to the present and succeeding members of the Commission, to whom it is primarily addressed, but also to all archivists and members of the public in general. A fair portion of the volume has been devoted to reviewing the work of the National Archives of India. It is the largest organised records repository in this country and it naturally attracted a good deal of attention from the Commission. Any review of the Commission would, therefore, be incomplete if it did not include an account of the National Archives.

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INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

A Retrospect

THE Indian Historical Records Commission was set up in March 1919 by a Resolution of the Government of India. It celebrates its Silver Jubilee in December 1948. The chronological discrepancy is easy to explain. During the lean years (1931-36) of financial stringency and economic slump it was in a state of suspended animation. A burden on the public exchequer, financially unproductive, the Commission was a natural victim of retrenchment for the official intellect is not too much obsessed with things of purely cultural interest. But the last war taught the belligerents to be more alert about their " musty old files," and the future of the Commission seems to be more assured to-day than it was eighteen years ago.

Official records have a tendency to accumulate and long before professional historians start peeping through the barricade, the administrations concerned have to attend to their housing and preservation and the compilation of convenient reference media. As early as 1861 the Government of India appointed a Committee to report on their archives. It was under the auspices of this Committee that Talboys Wheeler produced a most interesting report replete with information of the widest interest. For technical guidance, however, the Government of India relied mainly, if not solely, on British experts and they were expected to follow the lead of the British Government in their archival policy; until 1919, local talent was seldom exploited. The Government of India,

however, proved more conservative and less tolerant in their dealings with the non-official investigators and the India Office had to cater to the needs of an ever-increasing number of students from India. In 1914 the second *Report of the Royal Commission on Public Records* and a memorandum of Mr. (now Sir) William Foster of the India Office stressed the need for reviewing the prevailing position and pursuing a uniform policy with regard to the central and provincial records. The India Office was obviously anxious that Indian students should no longer be denied access to the raw materials of history available in their own country and it found the role of a permanent mentor inconvenient and irksome. The Government of India, on the other hand, were without a Committee of experts to help them in dealing with subjects professedly technical.

Rai Bahadur Jamini Mohan Mitra, then an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Education, made a halting and half-hearted suggestion that in ordinary times a small committee of archivists and historians might have been appointed, but 1917 was admittedly not a normal year. The country was faced with grave difficulties. Sir Edward Maclagan, Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Education, referred the question to Professor Ramsay Muir who strongly recommended the appointment of a Historical Materials Commission with its headquarters at Delhi. "This Commission should include the Officer-in-Charge of records in each of the British provinces, and also representatives from the principal Native States. Its chief executive officer should be a trained historian and archivist brought out from Europe—a man stronger (I venture to suggest) on the historical than on the archival side." The idea found favour with the

Government of India and in due course received the blessings of the Secretary of State and was finally implemented by Resolution No. 77 (General) of 21 March 1919.*

Constitution.

The Government of India, the Resolution runs, "feel that in matters relating to records they should have at their disposal a permanent body of expert advisers whose opinion would carry weight with the Records Officers and the public. With such a body at hand for advice, they are convinced that the methods adopted would meet the real wants of genuine historical students. They have accordingly decided to constitute an 'Indian Historical Records Commission' consisting of:—

1. The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, *ex-officio* President.
2. The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary.
3. The Curator, Madras Record Office, *ex-officio* member.
4. The Keeper of Records, Bengal, *ex-officio* member.
5. Professor Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., member.
6. The Ven'ble Archdeacon W. K. Firminger, M.A., B.D., B.Litt., member.
7. Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, M.A., member.
8. Mr. B. K. Thakore, B.A., member.

"The *ex-officio* members will be permanent, but the rest of the members will hold office for a period of three or five years. The headquarters of the Commission will be at Delhi and it would ordinarily meet twice a year—the routine work between meetings being carried on by the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, Calcutta, as permanent Secretary

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* *See* Appendix A.

to the Commission. The duties of the Commission would be of a purely consultative character; it would make enquiries and recommendations regarding (i) the treatment of archives for the purposes of historical study in all provinces of India and in such Indian States as might seek their advice; (ii) the scale and plan on which the cataloguing, calendaring and reprinting of each class of documents should be undertaken; (iii) the sums required for encouraging research and publication in respect of unpublished documents; (iv) the extent to which and the manner in which documents should be open to inspection by the public and (v) the training of Indian students from the Universities in methods of historical research and the selection of competent editors and assistants for the publication of documents. The Government of India have also arranged to place at the disposal of their Department of Education when the financial conditions improve, a grant of money, the distribution of which would be effected annually after consultation with the Commission."

It should be noted that the Commission consisted entirely of officials, for Archdeacon Firminger received his salary from the public revenues and Professor Rushbrook Williams had accepted a paid job under the Government, that all but three of the British Indian provinces went unrepresented, for no more than two could boast of organised records offices and that the executive head of the newly-appointed Commission was not a trained historian. A purely official body, unrepresentative of the provinces and Indian States, the Commission was not likely to inspire public confidence or to capture popular imagination.

The Commission, thus constituted, held its first meeting in camera at Simla on 19 and 20 June, 1919. It was

The first meeting.

attended by members only, the only non-member present being Rai Bahadur J. M. Mitra, a paid servant of the Government of India. Fully conscious of its isolation, the Commission decided to strengthen itself by enlisting the co-operation of a few Indian States and passed a resolution that Baroda, Gwalior and Indore might be invited to appoint either a common representative or each a separate representative in successive years as a co-opted member of the Commission. The proceedings do not explain why preference was given to those three States alone, for, other States, big and small, were not without their archival wealth. The Commission further recommended that, subject to the approval of the Government of India, the revised rules regulating the access of the public to the records might be introduced in the Imperial Record Office and brought to the notice of other offices. Its silence about financial grants was significant. Government servants were not going to make any recommendation that might embarrass their employers. They were not going to be indiscreet!

The second meeting of the Commission held at Lahore in January 1920 was attended by representatives of the Indore and Baroda States, but Gwalior held aloof. Mr. D. Dewar, Collector, Ghazipur, and Rai Bahadur B. A. Gupte, Curator of the Victoria Memorial Hall, both of them public servants, were present as co-opted members. In 1929, two ladies were co-opted as members of the Commission.

But the co-opted members did not bring new strength to the Commission. They were nominated *ad hoc* for all too transitory a term that expired with the particular session, and they ordinarily failed to cultivate an enduring interest in the work of the Commission. Obviously, it was necessary to

infuse fresh blood in the Commission and to associate Indian scholars in a larger number with its activities, but the unrepresentative governments and their nominees who were incapable of bold reforms suggested only half-hearted measures. At its sixth session at Madras the Commission recommended the appointment of a number of corresponding members from each province. In furtherance of the same principle, all the universities of India were invited to send representatives to the public meeting of the Commission in 1928 and delegates from seven of them attended the Nagpur session in December of that year. Since then, the university representatives have been participating in the members' meeting in ever-increasing numbers.

Reform of constitution.

At the beginning of 1940, after the Commission had been in active existence for 20 years, it was thought necessary to take stock of its achievements and to reform its constitution, should past experience, present needs and future objectives so demand. The Commission had indeed gained immense popularity. But it was admitted that the measure of the Commission's popularity was not the measure of its success. No doubt, it provided research scholars with a convenient platform where their spokesmen ably pleaded their cause, but otherwise it was not much of an effective force. Its recommendations did not carry as much weight with the administrations concerned as historians and archivists might wish. Much of the weakness of the Commission was obviously attributable to serious defects in its constitution.

The Commission started as a small body of officials. In later years occasionally a non-official or two were nominated,

Commission's drawbacks.

but the official element was still predominant. The Commission could not possibly achieve its main objectives without non-official co-operation. It was, therefore, necessary to invest it with a certain amount of representative character and the corresponding members were expected to serve as a useful link between the public on the one hand and the Commission on the other. It was no fault of the corresponding members if this fond expectation was not fulfilled. In the first place, no scholar, however eminent, could be enrolled as a corresponding member unless he was in the good books of the government of his province. The provincial government, however, had no initiative in the matter which lay with the Secretary of the Commission. Secondly, the corresponding members were really ornamental figures without any special right or privilege of their own. They could not even participate in the deliberations of the Commission unless and until the crude machinery of co-option was invoked in their favour. Co-option was confessedly indiscriminate. Anybody who might come forward to read a paper at the public meeting was, without exception, co-opted for the session. Thus the few historians and archivists who formed the core of the Commission were overwhelmingly out-numbered by co-opted non-experts who were not competent to deal with complex technical problems of preservation and reference media. In 1940 the Chairman had actually ruled that the Commission was not in a position to decide upon the comparative merits of two methods of repair. Thirdly, the corresponding members had at the beginning been appointed for an indefinite period with the result that their membership in many cases survived their usefulness. This shortcoming was indeed removed in 1929 when it was decided to limit

the term of corresponding membership to a period of three years only. But it did not completely shut out the idle and the indifferent absentee.

The greatest source of the Commission's weakness was its unrepresentative character. The half-hearted device of co-option had proved a failure. The universities changed their delegates from year to year. The provinces and the States might argue with some semblance of justice that the recommendations of the Commission need not be seriously treated as they were bound to be based on insufficient information, for, the Commission could not have before it the provincial governments' view-point on a subject vitally concerning them. The sessions indeed had their spectacular attractions. Two members once complained that it resembled more a social gathering than a serious meeting of technical experts. Radical reforms were obviously called for.

Greatest weakness.

The new constitution sought to convert the close preserve of nominated persons into a widely representative association of historians and archivists and provided for three categories of members, ordinary, associate and corresponding. As before, the nominees of the Government of India formed the active nucleus but their number was reduced from eight (raised for a few years to nine) to five, and the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India continued to serve *ex-officio* as its chief executive officer. The Hon'ble Education Member was to be the *ex-officio* President. The provinces and the States were given the right to send, if they were so inclined, their accredited representatives to the Commission. They were to be classed as ordinary members if the nominating governments had

New constitution.

organised central record offices of their own; otherwise they fell under the category of associate members. The universities and select learned associations were to be represented by associate members of their own choice. Members of all categories were to serve for a uniform period of five years. The number of corresponding members was to be limited to a maximum of forty at any one time and scholars with published works to their credit were alone to be selected in recognition of their contribution to the historical literature of the country. There was no difference under the proposed constitution between the rights and privileges of the ordinary and associate members, but the corresponding members could attend the business meetings of the Commission by special invitation only. Co-option was entirely to be done away with. To relieve the Commission of some of its responsibilities, a Research and Publication Committee was proposed to be appointed. Its membership was limited to the ordinary and associate members of the Commission. The Educational Adviser to the Government of India was to be its *ex-officio* Chairman and the Keeper of the Records its *ex-officio* Secretary. While the Commission met only **once a year,** the Committee was expected to meet twice annually, one of its bi-annual sessions being held at Delhi. It was also proposed to resuscitate the Standing Local Sub-Committee as an adjunct to the Commission. The Sub-Committee had been appointed in 1923 by the Government of India to function as an advisory body to the Keeper of Records and to make recommendations to the Government of India. Except for the initial years, it was practically defunct and the Government of India had found it necessary to reconstitute it in November 1939. The Local Records Sub-Committee, now proposed, was to consist of the Educational Commissioner

with the Government of India as *ex-officio* Chairman, the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India as *ex-officio* Secretary and two other local members and was, like its predecessor, " to advise the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India on such matters connected with the work of the Government as might be referred to it."

The draft constitution was circulated among the ordinary members, provincial governments and universities for criticism and comment. But for one provincial government, two ordinary members and one university, the principle underlying the new constitution was approved on all hands, a response hardly expected by its sponsors. The new constitution came into effect on 3 January 1942.* The five experts nominated by the Government of India were :—

1. Lt.-Col. H. BULLOCK, I.A., *Deputy Judge-Advocate General.*
2. Professor D. V. POTDAR, B.A., *Secretary, Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona.*
3. Professor MUHAMMAD HABIB, B.A. (Oxon.), *Professor of History, Aligarh University.*
4. Rao Saheb C. S. SRINIVASACHARI, M.A., *Head of the Department of History, Annamalai University.*
5. Dr. R. C. MAJUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D., *Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University.*

Four out of the five nominees of the Government were non-officials of varied experience, representing different regions and branches of historical learning. The political changes in August 1947 again rendered a slight amendment of the constitution necessary. In its general outline the constitution remained unaffected but the jurisdiction of the Commission was

* *See* Appendix B.

limited to the political boundary of the new Dominion of India.

The resolution of 1919 of the Government of India provided for two meetings of the Commission every year but in actual practice the sessions have been held annually. The Commission has so far held twenty-four sessions at different provincial capitals, States headquarters and university towns.* Of the eleven provinces of undivided India the Commission failed to visit only three, Assam, Sind and Orissa but it should be noted that prior to the secession of Burma it once met at Rangoon. The first meeting of the Commission was held at Simla, its agenda on that occasion being strictly limited to business of a purely technical nature. But the necessity of educating the public about its aims and objectives was soon realised and arrangements were made (1920) for holding a public meeting where papers of popular interest embodying results of original investigations should be read and for organising an exhibition of manuscripts and objects of historical interest. As the public meeting was ordinarily inaugurated by the executive head of the provincial administration or the ruler of the inviting State it was largely attended by the elite of the city but the exhibition usually attracted a much larger number of inquisitive visitors. On several occasions the exhibition had to be kept open longer than it was originally intended and it often brought to light old manuscripts whose importance was previously unsuspected and whose existence even was unknown to all but their owners. The Government of India had originally made a liberal financial provision for the exhibition but the grant was entirely withheld later, on grounds of economy. Thanks, however, to the munificence and enthusiasm of the

Public meeting and exhibition.

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* *See* Appendix C.

inviting States and the provinces, the exhibition still continues to be a special feature of the Commission's annual meeting.

A succession list of the *ex-officio* office-holders may not be without interest.* Among the Presidents are several distinguished administrators and statesmen who may rightfully claim to have played an important part in the history of our ancient land. Of the past Secretaries only one—Mr. A. F. Scholfield—is still in the land of the living; may he be spared for many years more to serve the University of Cambridge where he is now employed! The *ex-officio* President was at the same time a source of strength and weakness. An officer of high status and long experience, he was expected to serve as an able and effective exponent of the Commission's views and to convert the Government of India, whenever necessary, to its opinions but the Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Education was a busy official with heavy pre-occupations and he could not always attend the annual session of the Commission. If the two initial years are excluded, only thrice did the *ex-officio* President,—Sir Henry Sharp in 1922, Sir Frank Noyce in 1929 and Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai in 1938 find time to attend the annual meeting. In the absence of the permanent President, the deliberations of the Commission were generally conducted under the chairmanship of the seniormost ordinary member. For four sessions, from 1923 to 1925, Sir Evan Cotton was, for all practical purposes, the *de-facto* President and from 1926 till the reconstitution of the Commission in 1940 Sir Jadunath Sarkar was called upon to play that important role. Sir Evan unfortunately is no longer with us. Of the foundation members, Sir Jadunath Sarkar

Ex-officio office-holders.

* *See* Appendix D.

and Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams are still actively engaged in historical investigations. For whatever the Commission may have achieved from its fifth to the seventeenth session, all credit naturally goes to Sir Evan Cotton and Sir Jadunath Sarkar. It was they who influenced its early policy and sketched its first programme. The permanent Presidents had no intimate personal contact with the Commission over which they were supposed to preside. Thus the other permanent official—the Secretary—became the real link between the Commission and the Government. It was he who apprised the Government of the sentiments of the Commission on any question of outstanding importance and acted as the spokesman of the Government in the business meetings of the Commission. The Secretary and the seniormost ordinary member worked in uninterrupted harmony and the administrative machinery of the Commission was run smoothly without any hitch.

Ordinary members.

The ordinary members* were not indifferent to their new responsibilities. Everyone of course could not be expected to work with equal zest; but Professor Rushbrook Williams and Professor R. B. Ramsbotham placed their time and learning unsparingly at the disposal of the Imperial Record Department and contributed not a little to the improvement of its administration during their brief association with the Commission. The late Professor Henry Dodwell, then Curator of the Madras Records Office, prepared a small monograph under the first publication scheme. The late Professor S. K. Aiyangar returned again and again with characteristic zeal and persistence to the vexed problem of providing a proper key to that vast

* *See* Appendix E.

store-house of knowledge—the oriental manuscripts collected by Col. Colin Mackenzie.

To this brief survey of the origin and progress of the Commission may be conveniently added a short estimate of what it attempted and what it achieved. Many of its early efforts proved ineffective, though they did deserve better results. At the very first session a resolution sought to draw the attention of the provincial governments to the urgent need of concentrating district records. The district record rooms were usually in charge of ill-paid ministerial officers absolutely innocent of the elementary principles of archives-keeping; the conditions of storage were seldom satisfactory and even when a new building was provided for housing the records, the general design and equipment left much to be desired. In many cases old records had been reduced to pulp by ravaging insects, and the deleterious elements in the climate had caused permanent damage both to the paper and the writing. Yet these records were not without considerable historical and philological interest. The resolution was addressed to the governments of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in particular and to all provincial governments, except Madras and Bombay, in general. Twelve years later (1930), the problem was again discussed by the Commission at Patna, but the resolution still remains unimplemented.

Aims and achievements.

The first resolution of the first session desired to draw the attention of the government of Bombay to the need for the appointment of a whole-time expert officer to take charge of the central records office at Bombay. It was left to the present Congress government to implement this resolution, the urgency of which was beyond question, after an interval of nine and

twenty years. But if Bombay has been slow, other provinces have not been more alert. Records once damaged are lost for ever and prevention is always better than cure. Archivists, therefore, give precedence to preventive measures over those of rehabilitation. The Commission repeatedly urged upon the provinces the need of organising central record offices with a view to providing optimum conditions for their old papers. But their expostulations failed to evoke the response that had been hoped for. The Government of the North-West Frontier Province alone, and that as late as 1946, organised a central records office with a trained archivist at its head. Here also the belated action of the provincial administration might have proved of little avail, had not the foresight of the central administration rescued the records condemned by the local authorities from their impending doom. Undivided Punjab had been content with a part-time Keeper of Records who had custody of their historical records alone, housed in a Mughal tomb; the authorities concerned were obviously not alive to the symbolical irony of the situation. United Provinces, Central Provinces, Assam, Bihar and Orissa are still without organised central records offices. If the provinces were unresponsive, the Indian States could not be expected to be more amenable to the influence of the Commission. Many of them have a much richer store of records dating back to the Mughal days but few had taken the elementary precaution of providing them with proper repositories and fewer permitted the inquisitive students to pry into their closely guarded secrets. The fact is that the country was not record-minded but even if it had been otherwise, the Commission, when frustrated in its object, was not in a position to appeal to the public at large against the government of the day.

But if the balance-sheet is honestly drawn, it will be found that the credit side has not been altogether blank. It is entirely due to the efforts of the Commission that the research students' right of access to the historical records in official custody was first recognised and subsequently maintained and reinforced. This was no small achievement when we remember that a strong and influential element in the provinces and at the centre definitely held that the throwing open of records could not but prejudice the best interests of the State. The rules were indeed vague and ambiguous; the Keeper of Records was at liberty to refuse at his discretion any application for admission to the record room and he had to refer to the departments of origin before anyone was allowed to examine certain categories of records. In practice the research student was permitted to examine the manuscript index only and he was supplied with that part of the document alone which contained the particular information he sought. But this was a notable improvement on the previous practice which denied access to all but the specially favoured. There is reason to believe that even this small grudging concession was made because the demands of the Indian Historical Records Commission had been long anticipated by a similar request from the Secretary of State for India. The conservative element, however, could not reconcile themselves even to this small measure of halting and half-hearted reform and waited for a suitable opportunity of undoing it. The opportunity came when the Commission was in practical suspension in 1937. The old rules were not amended but a number of fees were imposed which were undoubtedly deterrent in their effect. The research students had to pay an inspection fee of Rs. 5/-, an examination fee of

Access to records.

Rs. 2/- per ten typed foolscap pages of transcript with a minimum of Rs. 15/- and the typing charges—all excerpts were required to be submitted in typescript—were regarded as prohibitive, for the official rate far exceeded the rate current in the market. Research students are proverbially people of limited means. The new rules proved vexatious in many other ways also. The excerpts submitted by the students were scrutinised by Secretariat assistants and superintendents without any historical training and important passages were often needlessly expunged. Months elapsed before the excerpts were finally released and this unintelligent interference with historical investigation was rightly resented. There is reason to believe that the authors of these impositions were not altogether unaware of the probable repercussions. Taxes on learning are everywhere unpopular and when the Commission met at Lahore in December 1937 after a long interval of enforced hibernation it recorded an emphatic protest against this unwarranted retrogression. The Government made some tardy concessions but the Commission returned to the charge the next year at Poona. In 1939 the whole position was reviewed and the Government decided to throw open all their non-current and non-confidential records to *bona fide* research students. Two questions had to be considered in this connection: What records were to be treated as non-current and who were to be considered as *bona fide* research students? Formerly research students were entitled to examine pre-Mutiny records alone, all the records of the Company period being classed as such irrespective of their dates. The Government decided to take a more liberal view of things and authorised their Keeper of Records to announce at the inaugural meeting of the 16th Session at Calcutta that henceforth *bona fide* reseach

students would be entitled to have access to all papers up to 1880. In 1940 it was decided that members of the Commission, University Professors and Readers and all persons recommended by the Head of a University Department should be treated as *bona fide* research students. The definition may appear to be narrow at first sight and may not be free from obvious inconsistencies but the rule has been administered in a spirit of liberality that left little room for genuine grievance. This was certainly one of the most notable achievements of the Commission. Its powerful and persistent advocacy at last gained for the Indian students the longed-for privilege of access to the official records of their country as a matter of right, and, though the right was not absolute or unqualified, its recognition was hailed as a great triumph. The Government, on the other hand, can claim the credit of conceding far more than had hitherto been demanded and instead of limiting their permission to the pre-Mutiny records, boldly extended it to documents of even more recent origin that might refer to living persons and questions of current interest. It must not be supposed that no one was on any account to be permitted to examine records of a later date. While the Keeper of Records could, at his own discretion, supply any record of the period specified above to a *bona fide* student, for release of documents of a subsequent date, the leave of the Department of origin had to be obtained and it should be noted that such leave was not always refused. Meanwhile the Commission has been pressing for further extension of the time-limit and it has been suggested that the death of Queen Victoria may serve as a convenient line of demarcation.

The decision of the Government of India was readily accepted by His Excellency the Crown Representative and

the new rules were put into force in the Residency Records Offices as well. They naturally applied to central records in provincial custody but were not binding on the provinces and different practices prevailed in different regions.

Provision of reference media.

Free access to official records could not be an end in itself. One of the principal objectives of the Commission was to train Indian students in scientific methods of historical investigation and Resolution 77 of 21 March, 1919, contemplated " removing, so far as possible, existing obstacles to research." Absence of proper facilities does in many cases operate as a practical impediment and it was widely recognised that adequate reference media should be available before Indian students could fully exploit the opportunities inherent in the policy of granting access to the archives. The Royal Commission on Public Records had carefully examined the relative merits and demerits of calendars and press-lists then in vogue and deliberately gave their verdict against both. The Government of India in their resolution, referred to above, had expressed themselves in favour of descriptive lists of records to be supplemented by handbooks. They also acknowledged the need for new record publications and reprints of old publications. Several provinces had already anticipated this recommendation. The Commission at its first session recommended that handbooks should be prepared on the lines indicated by Messrs. Scholfield and Dodwell in a joint note and it was also resolved " that the Government of India be requested to ascertain from the Government of Bombay their views on the proposal of a Source-book on Mahratta History during the 17th and 18th centuries and the possibility of obtaining pecuniary contributions towards the expenses of

its publication from the University of Bombay and from the Bharata Itihas Samshodhak Mandala of Poona and other local bodies and public-spirited individuals. Should the Government of Bombay consider the proposal a likely one the Government of India might be asked to contribute to the production of the volume at Re. 1/- a page. The Source-book should be in English and should contain English translations of original documents, summaries, etc." This long-winded resolution which left the determination of the policy to the Government of Bombay, its implementation to diverse public and private institutions and its financing to the central administration had better success than could be expected from its faltering tone. In due course a small volume was produced under the joint editorship of Professors H. G. Rawlinson and R. P. Patwardhan (in 1928) but it limited itself to the earliest period. Incomplete as this publication was, its importance cannot be too much emphasised as it formed an earnest of the future publication activities of the Bombay Government. Subsequently the Bombay Government brought out two important series of records publications. A huge mass of Marathi records relating to the Peshwa period had long been lying in the Alienation Office at Poona. Few students had any precise knowledge about their contents and there was an insistent demand, not only from the scholars from Maharashtra but from interested students from other provinces as well, that greater care should be taken for the better preservation of these invaluable documents and that *bona fide* students should be granted unrestricted access to them under such conditions as their safety and integrity might warrant. Between 1930 and 1934, 45 volumes of "Selections from the Peshwa Daftar" were published and no less than 11 volumes of another series,

viz., " Selections from Residency Records of Poona " saw the light between 1936 and 1943. The second series has not yet been completed.

New record publications.

The Government of India started their new record publications with some select educational documents. Prior to the appointment of the Commission, the Imperial Record Department had planned the calendaring in English of the very valuable Persian Correspondence in its custody and had already published three stout volumes of such calendars. In the early days the East India Company carried on their diplomatic correspondence with the Indian princes in Persian. It was the court language of those days and had gained wide currency among the educated people in India. With the spread of English education, however, the study of Persian language and literature steadily declined and it is now understood only by a gradually decreasing number of scholars. The peculiarity of the script proves a handicap even to those who are fairly familiar with the tongue. It was, therefore, felt that despite the obvious shortcomings of calendars this series would prove of exceptional value to the majority of Indian students to whom the originals will for ever remain a sealed book. Besides the Persian Correspondence, the Government of India were fully aware of the necessity of printing other records series either *in extenso* or in selections. The need of reprinting old publications was not ruled out either. In fact, the Government of India had to their credit an important series of records publications prepared by their first Records Officer, Sir George Forrest, which date back to 1890 and the utility of which had been widely recognised by universities in India

and England. For the time being, however, the Commission did not recommend any fresh undertaking of this nature.

Publication of handbooks and indexes.

In pursuance of the directives given by the Commission, handbooks were published by the Imperial Record Department in 1925, Bombay in 1921 and Madras in 1936. Press-listing was given up for good but the question of preparing more adequate reference media remained unsettled until 1940. In that year the Commission unanimously expressed itself in favour of compiling exhaustive indexes to each series, with glossaries for archaic words. An index prepared on proper lines has obvious advantages over both calendars and press-lists. In the opinion of the Royal Commission on Public Records, " calendaring is a process too slow, too elaborate and too costly to be applied to modern State Papers or to departmental papers in general." Press-lists, on the other hand, may fall far too short of the requirements of research students. Moreover, the value of calendars and press-lists is bound to vary according to the intellectual equipment of the persons employed, and standardisation of the technique is impossible to achieve. All these pitfalls may be avoided in indexing under proper supervision. A few months' training may enable the indexing staff to master all the necessary details of their science and a fairly uniform standard of work may be ensured provided the staff is not too large for a single supervising officer. No research student can depend entirely on calendars, however exhaustive, and must ultimately go to the original sources. An infallible key to those sources is, therefore, of greater use to him than anything else. An alphabetical index, properly compiled, tells him briefly all that he might wish to learn about the contents of a particular record

series. Before the Commission came to a definite decision two volumes of indexes were prepared by the Imperial Record Department for its examination and the work is now being continued in the National Archives of India on a larger scale. The resolution was passed with one dissentient voice only and Madras was deliberately excluded from its operation, that province having preferred to go on with its calendaring programme.

Five-year publication programme.

The Government had suggested in their Resolution No. 77 that the financial responsibility of future records publications may in certain cases fall entirely on the central administration, in other cases on private institutions and in some cases private institutions may be helped by the Government with suitable subventions. The need for new records publications was thus early recognised and the principle of financing them from public funds was unreservedly accepted, but the Commission did not apply itself to the task of formulating a publication programme for the Central Government till 1942. In that year a five-year publication scheme* was prepared and accepted by the Government of India. The Government accepted the entire financial responsibility of publishing twenty-one volumes of their early records and five volumes of miscellaneous publications. While the first twenty-one volumes were to be edited by scholars in university employment or private service selected by the Commission, under the general supervision of the Director of Archives, the editing of the second group was the sole responsibility of that officer. It was further decided that records in oriental languages should be published by universities and learned institutions at their

* *See* Appendix F.

own expense. The five-year publication programme has only been partially implemented. Better progress might have been made but for the scarcity of printing paper and other difficulties due to the war. While the five-year programme was being completed, the Commission prepared another programme to cover the next twenty years. The second scheme has been accepted by the Government of India in principle and it is satisfactory to note that in this respect the efforts of the Commission have been enthusiastically seconded by the universities and learned societies of India. Not only have the universities permitted their employees to participate actively in the editorial work, but they have in several cases undertaken the entire responsibility of editing and publishing several volumes of vernacular records and select correspondence in English.

Nor was the Commission content with merely passing resolutions and making recommendations. In a country with India's hoary antiquity a huge mass of historical manuscripts was bound to lie unnoticed and uncared for in private ownership. The owners in many cases had neither the requisite means nor the necessary knowledge to provide for their safe storage and preservation, but in such cases individual delinquency, whether intentional or otherwise, was bound to cause national loss. The Commission, therefore, decided that historical manuscripts in private custody must be brought to light and, where necessary, salvaged and a country-wide survey must be organised with that object in view. During the crucial years of war, however, the central and provincial governments were too pre-occupied with military efforts to spare any money or men for such a survey, but the task would brook no delay. Tons of old manuscripts, irrespective of their literary

Salvage of manuscripts in private custody.

or historical value, were being repulped in order to meet the prevailing paper scarcity. In other belligerent countries private enterprise had been enlisted to prevent any irreparable cultural loss due to indiscriminate repulping. In India, however, the Commission was the only organised party interested in preventing such disasters. It requested the provincial governments to appoint regional survey committees but the only province to treat the recommendation with any seriousness was undivided Punjab. Nothing daunted, the Commission appointed its own *ad hoc* Survey Committees: These Survey Committees were seriously handicapped by lack of funds. At last the Government of India sanctioned a small grant (Rs. 6,500/-) in August 1946, which was subsequently slightly enhanced. It is no wonder that the Regional Survey Committees have nothing spectacular to their credit. They carried on a useful propaganda in support of their cause and have been responsible for a few discoveries and some preventive work. Although peace has long been established, the *ad hoc* Regional Survey Committees still remain alone in the field; but small as their success has been, it must not be forgotten that but for their exertion the casualties might have been far heavier indeed. Even when the official machinery is set in motion, unofficial enthusiasm will have to be largely invoked if the Committees are to accomplish their allotted task.

Publication of an archives journal.

If the Commission was interested in the preservation of records in private and official custody, it could not afford to ignore the lack of trained archivists in the country and the appalling ignorance about the general principles of rehabilitation. The Government themselves in their Resolution No. F. 92-9/40-E of 16 September 1941 had admitted the

need for training a small number of private students as well as records office employees from the provinces, Residencies and States at the Imperial Record Department each year. The reconstituted Commission, at its very first session at Mysore (January 1942), urged the necessity of publishing a quarterly or bi-annual archives journal, with a view to disseminating the extant knowledge of the science of preservation and administration of archives. It was intended to serve as a medium of instruction for laymen interested in the subject. The Government of India readily accepted the recommendation, but its implementation had to be postponed for the time being.

Technical advice sought from Secretary.

The reconstituted Commission was also anxious to have more precise knowledge about the provincial and the States records. The Commission's recommendations were not mandatory and the provinces and the States were not bound to furnish any information about their archives, but for some time past they had been evincing a keen desire for mutual co-operation and the technical services of the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary of the Commission, had been sought by some of them more than once. In 1940 the Government of Bombay invited him to inspect and report on the old records housed in the Alienation Office at Poona and to advise them as to the best methods of preserving these valuable documents. In 1942 the Mysore Government similarly requested the Secretary to inspect their Secretariat Record Room at Bangalore and prepare a comprehensive scheme of reorganisation on the most up-to-date lines. At the instance of the Local Records Sub-Committee His Excellency the Crown Representative deputed the same officer to report on the Crown records and the precautionary

measures adopted for their protection against accidents of war in the then threatened provinces of Assam, Bengal, Orissa and Madras. While at Shillong, the Government of India's Keeper of Records was asked by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam to visit the provincial records office and to suggest improvements on the existing system, if necessary. Later a questionnaire was circulated with a view to eliciting all relevant information about the records offices in the States and the provinces. The answers were quite illuminating but not altogether free from inaccuracy in all cases. The Commission simply emphasised the growing practice of the past few years when, by the 10th resolution of the Udaipur session (December 1944), it authorised its Secretary "to work as the agent of the Commission in a general way and to persuade the provinces and the States to take such steps as may improve the prevailing archives arrangement if it is not quite up to date and to report to the Commission such fresh action as the provinces and the States may take from time to time." Next year it went a step further and stated (in confirming the recommendation of the Local Records Sub-Committee) that "this Commission is of opinion that it is desirable that the Director of Archives (as the Keeper of Records is now designated) should visit each province once in three years and submit a report to the Government of India and to the Indian Historical Records Commission on the state of preservation in which the old historical records may be found with such suggestions as may lead to improvement on the existing state of things." The resolution has met with the general approval of the States and the provinces with one dissentient only. No better evidence of the new spirit of co-operation could be expected. The provinces and the States found

nothing improper in the natural inquisitiveness of the Commission which was inspired by the best of motives, nor did they treat this as an unwarranted encroachment into their private sphere on the part of an outside body, for they had their accredited representatives on the Commission. On the contrary, some States and Residencies exploited this recommendation to their advantage and utilised the services of the Director of Archives when he happened to be in the neighbourhood on official duty. The nominee of the dissenting province, however, did not attend either of these sessions and had no opportunity of ascertaining the views of other members.

It is also to be noted that the new constitution had inspired the members of the Commission with a remarkable degree of confidence and sense of responsibility. No longer were things of vital interest left to the Secretary's initiative. Prior to 1942, most of the resolutions were sponsored by the Secretary and his staff and individual members seldom came forward with proposals of their own. Since then, the Secretariat has gradually retreated within its proper limits and for the last six years the members have been responsible for most of the resolutions on the agenda. Nor has the Chair vetoed or guillotined discussion on any subject. The Commission, in brief, does not lend its name to any recommendation which it cannot legitimately call its own. Consequently, the great majority of its recommendations has been accepted by the Government of India without any proviso or qualification, the few exceptions being attributable mainly to financial considerations.

The greatest achievement of the Commission, so far, has been the Post-War Reconstruction Scheme for Archives

Offices in India.* Although the principles enunciated there hold good for all archives offices, the scheme was specially meant for the National Archives, because the Commission has reason to be specially interested in its development. For one thing, the National Archives has served as its Secretariat from the very inception of the Commission, for another, the Central Government has proved more amenable to the Commission's influence and persuasion than the provincial administrations. The Post-War Reconstruction Scheme covers practically all the legitimate spheres of the activity of the National Archives. It is not possible to deal with all the recommendations here but the main objectives briefly stated are : (i) to bring the preservation section of the National Archives in line with those of the records offices in the most progressive countries of the world and (ii) to convert it into the greatest centre of historical investigation in India. The initiative in framing the scheme was taken by the Research and Publication Committee. At its fourth sitting on 3 March 1944, it indicated the improvements it would like the Government of India to introduce, and the report prepared under its direction was later unanimously accepted by the Indian Historical Records Commission at its Udaipur Session in December 1944. The fate of the scheme remained uncertain for a while, for it was apprehended that the financial and other difficulties caused by the War might seriously affect the Government's decision and the scheme might be pigeonholed for an indefinite period. But luckily the Government of India decided to accept it immediately in principle, the question of priority being left for the future. It must be a matter of great

Post-war reconstruction scheme.

* *See* Appendix G.

satisfaction to the Commission that free India has not put its project of cultural advancement into cold storage in spite of the more pressing needs of material progress.

It must be frankly admitted that these recommendations may not find whole-hearted support in every province. In fact, some of the provinces have not the wherewithal for providing their records offices with costly scientific equipment. The Commission did not ignore this inconvenient fact and recommended that the technical services of the National Archives should be extended to smaller institutions. One province has been particularly averse to some of the scientific methods of repair recommended by the Commission. The Commission approached the question with an open mind and in a scientific spirit. It was not inclined to be influenced by authoritative opinion prevailing in any particular country, but was guided solely by the logic of facts as verified in science laboratories. The Commission gave far more weight to experimental truth than to objections arising from untested apprehension.

The Commission may have deviated from the orthodox practice in recommending that attempts should be made to acquire original historical records in private custody in the country and microfilm copies of all manuscripts and rare publications relating to India from abroad. With regard to the manuscripts in private custody the important question of provenance was left out of consideration but the reason is obvious. When valuable records and other manuscripts are being recklessly destroyed or inconsiderately exported, the first concern of the country should be to save them. Once that has been done, there will be time enough for testing their evidential value and tracing their past movements. In any

case, they will not be classed as official archives although they may, for the sake of convenience, be placed in official custody. It is also true that it is not ordinarily the business of an archives office to go for rare publications, either in original or in authentic duplicates, but India is a poor country and during the last two centuries her old records and historical manuscripts have been widely dispersed. Since the throwing open of the records for study a steadily increasing number of students have been coming to the National Archives in search of research materials. They cannot derive the maximum benefit from their labour unless they have a good reference library close at hand. Nor can many of them afford to go to archives offices overseas to supplement their work in the National Archives of India. A good microfilm library will have to be built up and that in the near future in order to cater to the needs of our young intellectuals. Concentration and unified supervision will inevitably lead to economy so essential to India at the present stage of her economic development. A young country struggling for progress cannot always afford to be strictly orthodox and punctiliously correct.

With this ambitious but not impracticable reconstruction scheme, India will naturally have to go slow. But the Commission will patiently watch and wait. It has been its privilege to define the ideal while the country was yet under alien rule; it expects greater sympathy, more understanding and closer co-operation from free India, for its sole aim is to foster the spirit of research in this country, to remove the existing obstacles to research and to preserve for posterity its rightful heritage—the documentary records of the country's past. No country can to-day pursue a solitary track of its own and in her archival work, India, a latecomer in the field, will warmly

welcome co-operation from others. Such co-operation has in the past been abundantly forthcoming from far-off lands with widely different cultures and traditions. For, in the pursuit of knowledge and truth there is no difference of race, colour and creed. Individual wisdom may, however, sometimes come into conflict with collective experience and unanimity may not always be possible to attain. But so long as the Commission works in a spirit of service to the country it will derive strength even from apparent lack of harmony, for unanimity is not conducive to the progress of science and truth cannot be established by majority votes.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

An Account of Fifty-seven Years

THE Imperial Record Department (recently renamed the National Archives of India) came into existence in 1891. Prior to that, every department of the Government of India used to look after its own records and no uniform policy of archives administration could be either evolved or pursued. That does not mean that the Government of India were not alive to the importance of their official records.

Curiously enough the necessity of concentration was not brought home to the authorities concerned until destruction of useless records became imperative. Records had accumulated quite beyond the storing resources of the Government and in 1860 Sandeman, the Civil Auditor, pointed out that routine records of minor interest must be weeded out. At the same time he observed that " the benefit of the proposed destruction . . . would not be fully obtained without the substitution of one Grand Central Archive for the existing record rooms attached to each office for the purpose of transferring to it for safe preservation all records that might be of value—the offices concerned only in keeping such records as would be required for current use."

Weeding to be followed by concentration of non-current records under a single unified custody demanded their sorting and evaluation. A Record Committee was therefore

constituted in Calcutta in 1861 for the purpose of superintending the scheme for the destruction of all useless records in the public offices. The Committee in a memorandum submitted on 20 December 1862, after observing that "the greater portion of the papers had long since passed from the stage of practical official usefulness into that of purely historical and statistical interest," advocated that "such of the original documents as seem to be of any permanent interest in place of being scattered, as at present, over all Calcutta, should be preserved in a single muniment room." This recommendation met with the approval of the Government of India, but in August 1863, the President of the Record Committee, Mr. Seton Carr, abandoned the plan of a central record repository and advised the retention by the Secretariat Offices of their records in bulk. The Government accepted this proposal with the concurrence of the Secretary of State though, in his letter dated 12 October 1865, Sir Charles Wood pointed out the necessity of a central muniment room.

Record Committee.

In 1869 the Committee became moribund for all practical purposes with the appointment of its Secretary, J. Talboys Wheeler, to the British Burma Commission but the question of concentrating historical records in a central office was kept alive by Professor G. W. Forrest. In 1889 he was placed by the Government of India on special duty to examine the records of the Foreign Office. In his report dated 17 August of that year he deplored that "the Government of India does not possess what the smallest State in Germany has, an Imperial Record Office, in which the ancient records of the State are arranged, calendared and catalogued on scientific principles." After pointing out how "ignorant and

indifferent custodians, damp and white ants have led to the destruction of many documents" and how most valuable muniments were fast rotting away in the archives of the various departments, he recommended that all the records relating to the administration of the East India Company should be placed in one central records office.

Thus was the question of the establishment of a central records office again brought to the front. While all the members of the Governor-General's Council recognised the urgency of preservation and systematic arrangement of ancient records they could not agree about their ultimate destination. The majority was in favour of a central records office but a minority of two held a contrary view. Eventually the Government of India decided to approach the Secretary of State (Despatch dated 11 February 1891) for permission to employ Mr. Forrest as Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India for the examination of the old records of each of the departments and the cataloguing and arrangement of the same on a satisfactory plan and for organising a central library in place of the different departmental libraries. On the question of a central records office the Government wrote that though they did not contemplate construction of a special building for such an office, they would possibly find it expedient to deposit the old records in a central records office and to provide a permanent staff for their custody and study.

The Secretary of State promptly conveyed the necessary sanction (dated 10 March 1891) and Mr. Forrest was appointed Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India with effect from 11 March 1891. The work of transferring the records of the Home Department and the organisation of the library

G. W. Forrest

began on 11 May and was completed by 19 June. Gradually records of other offices also were deposited in the Imperial Record Department which was located in the new Imperial Secretariat building opposite the Government House at Calcutta.

The Imperial Record Department was fortunate in its first Officer-in-Charge.* Born on 8 January 1846 at Nasirabad, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, George William Forrest came to India in 1872 as Head Master of the Surat High School. He was later transferred to the Deccan College, Poona, as Professor of Mathematics and later to the Elphinstone College, Bombay, as Professor of English History. Among the youthful aspirants to learning who attended Forrest's lectures at Poona was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Forrest was not long content with dealing in other people's ware and began to explore the old records of the Bombay Government on his own account. His acumen for historical investigation quickly received official recognition, and in 1884, he was placed on special duty "for examining and selecting for compilation the early records of the Bombay Presidency" and thus began a long career of fruitful research which continued long after his retirement. In January 1888, Forrest was deputed by the Bombay Government to study the arrangement and the calendaring of the records of the Government of India with a view to utilising the experience thus gained for the reorganisation of the Bombay Records Office. By 1889 his reputation as an archivist had been so firmly established that the Government of India requisitioned his services and invited him to examine the records of the Foreign Department. His report revealed the chaotic condition in which the records in the Secretariat had been permitted to remain and ultimately led to

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* For a list of the Officers-in-Charge of Records, *see* Appendix H.

the establishment of the Central Record Office. In 1890 he was in England and while there, he visited, under instruction, the Public Record Office, the British Museum, etc., to study the administration of these offices obviously with a view to equipping himself adequately for the great task that was shortly to be his. In March 1891, he was appointed, as already noted above, the Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India. Though he technically held this post till 1899, his active association with the Record Office did not count more than four and a half years. In March 1895, he went on a year's furlough which was later extended up to October 1898. He came to India for a short while after his leave expired and finally returned home in March 1899 on furlough for eight months. He was subsequently placed on special duty in England till 8 November 1900 when he was permitted to formally relinquish his office.

Forrest had before him a two-fold task. He was by temperament a historical investigator. His quest for the original sources had brought him into close contact with the archives of India. But he realised that unless these valuable records were properly arranged, repaired and catalogued, they could not be of service to research students for any length of time. He therefore interested himself both in preservation and publication. It may be complained that the historian in him got better of the archivist but he could not rise above the established traditions of the time and the natural impulse to vindicate the early British administrators in India. This explains at once the merits and the demerits of his works.

The main concern of the Committee appointed in 1861 was the supervision of weeding and rearrangement of official records. But this essential object was entirely overlooked

and the members of the Committee busied themselves in purely literary pursuits. It was to this academic bias that we owe Long's *Selections from Unpublished Records of Government* (1748-67) and the two reports of J. Talboys Wheeler on the records of the Home and the Foreign Departments. Subsequently under the same inspiration Scott Smith essayed to prepare the *Calendar of Indian State Papers, Secret Series*, 1774-75. Brief as it is, the calendar remained incomplete but the Government of India's faith in the propaganda value of records publications remained unshaken. In 1872 they advocated the publication of old records "as a matter of political importance" and argued that this "would do much to prevent misconstruction of the policy and motives of Indian Governments." The Secretary of State negatived the proposal on financial grounds and as a compromise Talboys Wheeler was employed to make selections from the General Letters. The year 1878 witnessed the publication of Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*. In 1889 it was finally decided to prepare press-lists of official papers and two years later Forrest was placed in charge of the newly-created Imperial Record Department. Illuminating as the above-mentioned publications undoubtedly were, we must not forget that the Committee's literary achievements connoted negation of purely archival objectives and that the Government of India's publication policy was not free from political motives. It is against this background that Forrest's historical and archival work should be judged.

Forrest's literary activities.

Forrest had several volumes of records publications to his credit before he was commissioned to organise the Central Records Office. In 1884 he published his *Selections from the Letters,*

Despatches and other State Papers in the Bombay Secretariat. Five years later followed two more volumes of similar selections.* Three volumes of *Selections from the State Papers of Warren Hastings* preserved in the Foreign Office were published in 1890. In making this selection Forrest had a definite object in view. His main thesis was that Warren Hastings was an innocent victim of contemporary prejudices, and documents were specially selected to establish this viewpoint or, to quote the Government of

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* *Published Works of G. W. Forrest :*

1. Selections from the Minutes of the Hon'ble M. Elphinstone with an introductory memoir (Bombay, 1884); 2. Selections from the letters, despatches and other State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat —Maratha Series, Vol. I (Bombay, 1885); 3. Selections from the letters, despatches and other State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat—Home Series, 2 Vols. (Bombay, 1887); 4 Selections from letters, despatches and other papers preserved in the Foreign Department of the Government of India, 1772-85, 3 Vols. (Cal. 1890); 5. The Administration of Warren Hastings, 1772-85 (Cal. 1892); 6. Bengal and Madras Papers, 1671-1785, 3 Vols. (Cal. 1892-93); 7. Selections from letters, etc., preserved in the Military Department of the Government of India, 1857-58, 4 Vols. (Cal. 1893-1912); 8. The Administration of the Marquis Lansdowne as Viceroy and the Governor-General of India, 1888-94 (Cal. 1894); 9. The Famine in India (London, 1897); 10. Sepoy Generals, Wellington to Roberts (Edinburgh, 1901); 11. Cities of India (Westminster, 1903); 12. A History of the Indian Mutiny, 3 Vols. (London, 1904-12); 13. Selections from the travels and journals preserved in the Bombay Secretariat (Bombay, 1906); 14. Siege of Madras in 1746 and the action of La Bourdonnais (London, 1908); 15. Life of Field Marshall Sir Neville Chamberlain (London, 1909); 16. Selections from the State Papers of the Governors-General of India—Warren Hastings, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1910); 17. The Life of Lord Roberts (Lond. 1914); 18. The Life of Lord Clive—2 Vols. (Lond. 1918); and 19. Selections from the State Papers of the Governors-General of India, Lord Cornwallis, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1926).

India, "to prevent misconstruction of the policy and motives of Indian Governments." Official papers were therefore not printed *in extenso* and inconvenient facts were not always given publicity. As Professor P. E. Roberts complains, a specific part of an official paper favourable to Raja Chait Singh of Benares was deliberately left out. His Mutiny papers are not free from such defects either. By the simple device of an extra zero he multiplied the Rani of Jhansi's pension ten-fold and made it equate with that of Peshwa Baji Rao II and thus established to his own satisfaction that the Rani had been very liberally provided. It should be noted that the Government gave him unprecedented facilities for his historical investigations. Prolonged furloughs at Home enabled him to exploit all the resources of the British archives offices and also to work quietly at London in complete freedom from the day-to-day drudgery of an administrative department. Nor did his scholarly industry go without material rewards. A total gratuity of fourteen thousand rupees,* when its purchasing power was yet at par, was no mean incentive to intellectual exertions. Other rewards were not slow in coming. A Knighthood (January 1913) followed the Companionship of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (3 June 1899), before Forrest passed away in 1926 full of honours and years. In spite of their obvious defects, Forrest's works will long be consulted by university teachers and students as the earliest source-books of Indo-British history.

* Rs. 2,000 in 1892 for having compiled the "Selections from the Letters, Despatches, etc., of the Government of India, 1772-85." A further Rs. 2,000 in 1894 for his first volume of the "Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Military Department of the Government of India, 1857-58" and Rs. 10,000 in 1902 for two more volumes of the same.

Nor will they fail to supply the protagonists of Warren Hastings with plenty of ammunition. It cannot be denied that Forrest brought to his work uncommon erudition and unflagging zeal and if his study was not purely objective, he was influenced only by the partisan spirit of his times and it is not to be insinuated that his defence of Warren Hastings or his denunciation of the Sepoy leaders was in any way inspired by motives other than patriotic. An Irishman by birth, a nationalist by conviction, Forrest like many of his impulsive compatriots, had completely identified himself with the cause of which Disraeli was the prophet and Rudyard Kipling the poet.

Forrest as an archivist.

Though better known for his historical works, Forrest was not indifferent to his archival responsibilities. The current records indeed were no concern of his, but the preservation, classification and publication of historical documents were no mean undertaking. He first set himself to prepare a programme of work and to recruit the necessary staff. The staff he demanded was a modest one — one assistant, eight clerks, eighteen daftaries and coolies for his archives and a temporary staff of two munshies and two pandits for the consolidated library which was to be his additional charge. With their assistance he proposed to arrange the library and the archives and to rescue them from the prevailing chaos and disorder. He tried his best to undo the evils of previous neglect and to formulate an elaborate set of rules for the guidance of his staff. If he could not do as much as he would for the rehabilitation of the fragile documents. it must not be forgotten that nearly half of his official term was spent abroad, away from the muniments in his custody. In spite of other pre-occupations,

by 1899, Forrest and his colleagues had arranged the following series chronologically as well as in accordance with the source of their origin:

Home	1752-1879
Medical Board and Surgeon-General's	1845-1859
Military Board	1777-1858
Public Works	1850-1871
Foreign	1764-1829
Military	1786-1893

One of the most valued accessions of Forrest's regime was the Foreign Department's correspondence with Indian rulers. Though the overwhelming bulk of this correspondence is in Persian there are in this series letters in other oriental and Indian languages as well. Besides their historical value these letters have also philological and literary interest and as some of them are beautifully illuminated they offer excellent specimens of the Indian calligraphist's art.

Forrest had no time for preparing the much-needed reference media without which the archives cannot be adequately or conveniently consulted. Four years before his assumption of office, in 1887, a committee consisting of Godley, Henry Yule and General Strachey was appointed in England to consider how records in the India Office could best be made available for the purpose of historical research. The Committee after consulting Maxwell Lyte, Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office, recommended the publication of press-lists as a first step to be followed by more elaborate calendars. But due to a variety of reasons neither press-listing nor calendaring could be immediately undertaken by the Imperial Record Department, though Madras started the projected work at once. In a despatch dated

3 June 1897, the Secretary of State issued the following instructions :—

(*a*) Press-lists should be prepared in India of the documents at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay; and

(*b*) The press-lists should follow the detailed Madras form.

The Government of India had already employed an officer familiar with the Madras system to officiate for Forrest.

A. T. Pringle.

A. T. Pringle (March 1895 to October 1898), the temporary incumbent of the office, was Assistant Secretary to the Government of Madras before he came to the Imperial Record Department. He had previously worked as Record Keeper, Public Works Department, Madras and was therefore fully conversant with the technique of his special task. Press-listing was promptly started under his supervision. But the Madras form proved unnecessarily elaborate and the progress was disappointingly slow. It was estimated that the programme, as it then stood, could not be completed in less than half a century. When Forrest finally left India in March 1899, not even the pre-Plassey papers had been completed, and the Madras model collapsed under its own weight.

Samuel Charles Hill, Forrest's successor, began his career as a professor like him. Born at Berhampore, Bengal, in the

S. C. Hill.

year of the Mutiny, and educated at the University College, London, whence he graduated B.A. and B.Sc., Hill joined the Indian Education Service (Bengal) in June 1881 as Professor, Dacca College. From 1881 to February 1899 he served in turn as Principal, Krishnagar College, Professor, Hooghly College, Professor, Presidency College and Inspector of Schools, Bihar

and Presidency Circles. Hill was in actual charge of the central records for barely three years from March 1899 to March 1902. He was on furlough in England till November 1903 and was thereafter placed on special duty in England and on the continent till July 1904, when he left for the Central Provinces as Director of Public Instruction. He finally retired from service in July 1912 and settled at London where the rest of his years were devoted to his favourite studies. Hill died at Torquay on 6 May 1926.

Hill's publications.

Hill's brief tenure of office is marked by valuable research publications and archival work of vital importance. The three years from 1901 to 1903 saw the publication of *Life of Claud Martin*, *Abstract of the Foreign Department Records* for 1756-62, *List of the Europeans in Bengal at the Time of the Black Hole Episode* and *Three Frenchmen in Bengal*. In 1905 appeared his monumental work *Bengal in 1756-57* which at once established his reputation as a diligent student of official records and an honest seeker of truth.* Both as a historian and an archivist Hill must be placed much above his predecessor. He did not constitute himself the champion of any particular cause, his conclusions being firmly founded on irrefutable logic of well-authenticated facts. His knowledge of the Government of India and India Office records still

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* *Published Works of S. C. Hill :*

1. Life of Claud Martin (1901); 2. List of the Europeans in Bengal at the time of the Black Hole Episode (1902); 3. Three Frenchmen in Bengal (1903); 4. Bengal in 1756-57, 3 Vols. (1905); 5. Yusuf Khan, the Rebel Commandant (1914); 6. An Analytical Catalogue of the Orme Manuscripts in the India Office Library (1916); 7. India Office Records—Home Miscellaneous Series—Published posthumously (1927).

remains unsurpassed with one possible exception, that of Sir William Foster.

Voluminous as his publications were, Hill did not fail to take effective steps to rehabilitate the fragile papers in his custody. The folded records demanded his attention first and it was decided to flatten each and every sheet and to place each flattened document after necessary repairs between docket covers for better protection and easier identification. They were later to be made into bundles. For repairing of records Hill introduced in 1900 a superior quality of tracing paper recommended by the India Office. Tracing paper later proved to be undesirable as a repairing material but Hill was naturally guided by the expert opinion then available. The Department was lucky in its new acquisition (1901) of an interesting collection comprising 16 old maps of Calcutta. Another valuable addition to its stock was the surplus copies of old *Calcutta Gazette* from the office of the Comptroller, India Treasuries. These, according to Hill, "form the only source of many interesting historical events and are a necessary supplement to the Government records". It was during Hill's regime that a list of the Military and the Private Secretaries to the Governors-General and Viceroys since the time of Warren Hastings was compiled and a Calendar of the Proceedings of the Select Committee, 1756-60, was prepared.

Hill's archival work.

Reference has already been made to his *Abstract of the Early Records of the Foreign Department*, 1756-62, published by the Department in 1901, which testifies to Hill's interest in the preparation of convenient reference media. The press-lists of Public proceedings from March 1754 to 1757 were successfully completed. He found the Madras system of

press-listing, introduced at the instance of the Home authorities, too elaborate and too slow and suggested a simpler plan in 1901 which was adopted for the subsequent volumes with the approval of the Secretary of State.

When Hill made over charge to Dr. C. R. Wilson on 18 March 1902, the Imperial Record Department had made substantial progress both in the rehabilitation of disintegrating documents and in the preparation of reference media while the scholarly publications of the Officer-in-Charge would do credit to any records office in the world.

Charles Robert Wilson officiated for S. C. Hill for a brief interlude of about two years only (18 March 1902—24 May 1904). He had brought to his office uncommon knowledge of unpublished records and a well-earned reputation for sound historical scholarship. Born in London, 1863 and educated at Wadham College, Oxford, Wilson like his immediate predecessor joined the Indian Education Service as Professor, Dacca College (1887). From Dacca he went to the Presidency College of Calcutta (1895) to become subsequently Principal of the Patna College (1900). In 1895 Wilson published the first volume of his *magnum opus*—*The Early Annals of the English in Bengal;* a part of the next volume followed five years later and the concluding part appeared posthumously seven years after the author's death. The *Annals* earned him the highest honour in the gift of his *alma mater*, the Doctor's degree in literature. In 1896 was published the *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments of Bengal* edited by Wilson. Two volumes of *Old Fort William in Bengal* found a place in the Indian Records Series a year after his death (1905). As Irvine says: " Allowing for his comparatively

C. R. Wilson.

short life, most of it passed under the constant pressure of arduous official duties, Mr. Wilson's literary output was considerable; nor was it of a light or perfunctory nature, the mere amusement of a cultured mind's idle hours "

As Officer-in-Charge of Records, Wilson brought out the sixth volume of the *Public Press-lists* (1760-64) which covered about 8,000 manuscript pages, and a *Press-list of Bengal and Madras Papers*. During 1903, he got the material ready for the seventh and eighth volumes of the press-lists, and tried to fill in the gaps in the records by obtaining copies from the India Office. It was he who mooted the proposal for calendaring the Persian correspondence, though the honour of inaugurating the series was not to be his. On 24 May 1904 Wilson proceeded on furlough to England where he died on 24 July at the early age of 41. Dr. E. Denison Ross officiated for him till 27 June 1904 when N. L. Hallward took charge of the Department.

N. L. Hallward.

Norman Leslie Hallward, like his predecessors, came from the Indian Education Service and started his professorial career at Dacca. He worked in the Imperial Records barely for a year and relinquished office on his promotion as Director of Public Instruction, Assam, in May 1905. During this short period he published the ***List of the Home Department Records*** from 1749 to 1859 and sent a further list of the records (1859-92) to press. He also prepared a list of the English translations of the Persian correspondence received and issued by the Government from 1759 to 1760, an index to the press-lists of the Public proceedings from 1749 to 1759 and abstracts of original Persian correspondence (1708-81). In 1920, while in retirement, Hallward published the only original work to his credit, *William Bolts; A Dutch Adventurer under John Company*.

In those days the Officer-in-Charge of the Government of India's Records was usually recruited from the Indian Education Service and Hallward's successor also came from the same quarters. The practice had its disadvantages as well as advantages. If the service supplied some of the most brilliant officers, its rules of promotion made their tenure in the Records Office extremely uncertain as happened in the case of Hill and Hallward.

E. Denison Ross.

Edward Denison Ross was "best known to his contemporaries as a brilliant linguist, especially learned in oriental languages". Born on 6 June 1871, Ross began his education at Marlborough and University College, London, but subsequently migrated to Paris and Strassbourg where he graduated Ph.D. For five years he taught Persian at his old college and in 1901 came to Calcutta as Principal of the Madrassah founded by Warren Hastings. In January 1906* he was appointed Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India at the instance of Lord Curzon whose confidence in Ross's learning and ability was equalled only by the latter's admiration for the Viceroy. For several years (1905-11) Ross was in double harness as a suitable successor in the Madrassah was not easy to find and he had to carry on the arduous duties of two highly responsible posts. In 1907 he went on furlough to Europe and made himself familiar with archival practices of France and Holland. His duties in the Record Office "were three-fold (1) the filing, indexing, and preservation of the

* During the interval between Hallward's departure in May 1905 and Ross's assumption of office in January 1906, the charge of the office was held successively by H. G. Graves (until 24 May), J. Macfarlane, Librarian, Imperial Library (until 31 October), and Ross himself (until his appointment to the post).

records, and these went back to the days of Warren Hastings, and included the voluminous correspondence which that great administrator conducted in the Persian language with the Indian princes and Chiefs; (2) all the correspondence regarding the Government of India's patronage of learned publications, and also the distribution throughout the world of those publications; (3) a variety of questions filtering through to me from the different departments, such question as my special studies pointed me out as the man to deal with". This brief summary of the duties and functions of the Officer-in-Charge of Records still holds good. Ross retired from the Imperial Record Department in 1914 to become two years later the Director of the newly-founded School of Oriental and African Studies at London. He died in 1940 at Istambul, while the second World War was at its height.

Ross was not new to the Department. In 1904 he was for a few months in temporary charge of the records and had started press-listing the Persian correspondence. His intimate knowledge of the Persian language and literature naturally interested him in the huge mass of Persian correspondence which was a sealed book to most students of Indian history. He therefore enthusiastically supported Dr. Wilson's suggestions that these documents should be calendared in English. Ross found no difficulty in securing the Government's approval for the necessary staff. Four Moulvis well versed in Persian and interested in historical research were recruited. The first volume of the Calendar was published in 1911. This covered the period from 1759 to 1767. The second volume (1767-69) was published in 1914 shortly after Ross left this country.

Calendaring of Persian correspondence commenced.

It was during Ross's tenure of office that a systematic attempt was made to prepare an inventory of the records in the custody of the Department. A list of Foreign Department records in three volumes was published. Two other lists, those of the records of the Military and Finance Departments in three volumes and one volume respectively also saw the light. But that was not all. The compilation of reference media was continued vigorously and press-lists of Public Department proceedings, original Persian letters and correspondence (1759-1801) and Madras Military records were made ready. Moreover, materials were collected for a history of the Government Houses at Calcutta and Barrackpore.

The Imperial Record Department was under the Home Department till 1910 when it was transferred to the care of the newly-created Department of Education and the Officer-in-Charge, formerly an Assistant Secretary in the Home Department, became an *ex-officio* Assistant Secretary in the Department of Education.

Ross was the last of a distinguished band of Indian Education Service men who contributed so much to the building up of the central archives office. The appointment of his successor marked a departure from the old policy of placing brilliant historians and linguists in charge of the records.

A. F. Scholfield.

Alwyn Faber Scholfield occupies a place of special importance in the history of the National Archives. Born in February 1884, educated at Eton and Cambridge, Scholfield joined the Department as Ross's Assistant Officer in November 1912.*

* The post of an Assistant to the Officer-in-Charge of the Records was created in 1906 and H. Claughton was appointed to that office with effect from 11 October 1906. The post was not filled up after Scholfield was made the Officer-in-Charge in 1915.

Unlike his predecessors he has no scholarly publication to his credit, but he put the preservation branch on a sounder basis and trained the menders in the science and technique of repair. It was he who discarded the unsatisfactory tracing paper in favour of the more enduring chiffon and the less expensive Japanese tissue paper. In fact, he often repaired brittle documents with his own hands so that none of the essential details might be lost to his neophytes. There was no branch of archival activities that Scholfield left untouched or unimproved. It was under him that press-listing of the Public proceedings up to 1800 was completed. He added a supplementary volume to include the papers brought to light since the publication of the regular series. Press-lists were also prepared for the papers of the Secret Department of Inspection (1770-87) and the Secret Department Proceedings (1763-75). Calendaring work continued to make steady progress and the third volume of the Calendar of Persian Correspondence (1767-69) was taken in hand. Himself an expert indexer, Scholfield initiated a consolidated index to the entire series of Public Press-lists which has proved a very useful and convenient book of reference to research students. Elaborate rules for indexing were prepared and published in the form of a pamphlet (*Indexing of Records*) for the guidance of future workers. He also compiled a staff manual with a view to reminding " old hands of their various duties and guiding new assistants in tasks which are probably strange to them ". Scrupulously methodical and systematic in his work, Scholfield was not prepared to leave anything to chance. Everything was placed on its proper basis, all contingencies were provided for and the rules he framed, the regulations he drew up form excellent models of prescience and orderly

planning. It was significant of the new regime that the designation of the Officer-in-Charge was changed to that of the Keeper of Records. If his predecessors had lent academic distinction to the Department, Scholfield endowed it with the less spectacular but more essential virtue of technical efficiency.

The Keeper of Records played no mean part in enunciating the policy of the Indian Historical Records Commission which was appointed in 1919. Scholfield's association with the Commission was necessarily brief, for he retired immediately after its first Session at Simla. While all his predecessors and successors (with the exception of the present Director of Archives) have been gathered to the gods, Mr. Scholfield is still serving the cause so dear to him in another capacity in his native island.

Scholfield's reorganisation of the preservation branch attracted the admiring notice of other archivists in India and they confidently looked to the Imperial Record Department not only for technical services but also for providing the necessary training to their staff.

Improved Repair Service extended and technical training imparted to other archivists.

In November 1916 Mr. P. Dias, Superintendent of the Imperial Record Department, was appointed Keeper of the Records of the Government of Bengal. Shortly after Scholfield's retirement, Professor Henry Dodwell, then Curator, Madras Record Office, deputed one assistant and two attendants to Calcutta for training in the newly-introduced methods of repair and renovation (1920). The next call for service came from the historic State of Jaipur. The State was well known for its wealth of medieval records and it was at one time believed that when the Jaipur records were thrown open to research students, the history of Mughal India might have to be entirely

revised and rewritten. But as elsewhere, the State archives was in a state of chronic disorder and the old documents were in different stages of decay and disintegration. In 1924 the services of a Moulvi and an experienced mender were lent to the Jaipur Government for arranging, cataloguing and repairing the historical manuscripts of the State. They did something more, for, before they left they imparted to some members of the Jaipur Record staff their technical knowledge of cataloguing and mending. In 1927 the Punjab followed the example of Madras and sent a binder for training in the new methods of preservation. The next year, Baroda deputed its Rajdaftardar, Professor C. V. Joshi, to study the Calcutta system of repair and in 1929 his colleague, Mr. B. N. Raleraskar, spent three months at the Imperial Record Department for the same purpose. In 1930 the Assam Government deputed Professor S. K. Bhuiyan to study the methods of preservation and treatment of old papers. Five years later, similar training was given to Mr. K. S. K. Swami of the Bombay Secretariat at the request of the provincial government. Thus did other archives offices of India derive direct or indirect benefit from the labours of Scholfield long after he had left the country and the Imperial Record Department continued to extend to the provinces and the States such guidance and services as they stood in need of. With Scholfield ended the first period in the history of the Imperial Records which covers well-nigh three decades. For the next two (1919-39), neither historians nor trained archivists were in demand, for archival work and the office of the Keeper of Records went invariably to the members of the administrative or Secretariat service. The new epoch started with Blaker and ended with Abdul Ali.

Richard Henry Blaker was a Superintendent in the Education Department before he came to the Records Office as Assistant Officer-in-Charge (1912).

R. H. Blaker.

Familiar with Scholfield's plans and methods of work, he was naturally expected to continue his predecessor's policy but his tenure of office was too short for any big undertaking or novel experiment. Promoted to the Keeper's office on 21 June 1919, Blaker retired on superannuation on 23 September of the following year, exactly fifteen months and three days later. But new work could not be entirely avoided as henceforth it was the privilege of the Indian Historical Records Commission to indicate the desideratum and the responsibility of the Records Department to do the needful. The Commission required all records offices in the country to compile popular handbooks for the use of research students. Not only were the principal series of records and their general nature and contents to be concisely outlined but the gradual evolution of the different branches of administration from which the records originated was also to be accurately traced. It demanded careful research among the records themselves and the preliminary work was initiated by Blaker. The third volume of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* was published and the press-listing of the Mutiny papers completed during his regime.

Rai Bahadur Jamini Mohan Mitra was the first Indian to be placed at the head of the Imperial Record Department.

J. M. Mitra.

He began his official career in the Bengal Provincial Civil Service and subsequently became Assistant Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Education (1917) when that office was not open to the ministerial officers of the Secretariat.

In November 1920, he succeeded Blaker as Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, to leave early in 1922 on his appointment as Registrar of Co-operative Credit Societies, Bengal.

In 1917 the Government had decided to give up the old tabular form in the press-lists in favour of the run-on style. It was left to Mitra to implement this decision. Accordingly, the manuscript press-lists of the Secret and Separate Department records were revised and remodelled and those of the Chandernagore and Chinsura proceedings completed. It was discovered that when Bengal was constituted a Lieutenant Governor's province and the records of the Central and Provincial Governments were separated, some papers through mistake or oversight were allotted to the wrong party despite their previous association with the series of origin. Mitra completed the preliminary enquiries and arranged for the restoration of the stray papers to their proper places. He also suggested that the general letters to and from the Court should be calendared from 1747 instead of 1757 as originally proposed, for, though the political history of these earlier years had been sufficiently investigated, the commercial and economic history still remained to be scientifically explored. This suggestion was later endorsed by the Indian Historical Records Commission but the work had to be abandoned in 1923 in favour of classification then considered to be more urgent.

Mitra had to face one of the most inexorable enemies of manuscripts and printed books to be found in tropical countries. The termite, erroneously called white ant, may be a model of industry and social co-operation but when that industry is employed in the consumption of cellulose material, the archivist has to wage against it a war of extermination.

Luckily the presence of the termites in the muniment room was discovered before any serious damage was done and raw creosote proved an effective enough deterrent for these crawling abominations.

A. F. M. Abdul Ali.

Abul Faiz Muhammad Abdul Ali, Mitra's successor, came like him from the Bengal Provincial Civil Service. Son of Nawab Abdul Latif, a notable product of early western education in Bengal, Abdul Ali was an able exponent of Muslim culture and a perfect embodiment of traditional Muslim courtesy. It was to his genial personality that much of the early popularity of the Indian Historical Records Commission was due. Abdul Ali held office for nearly seventeen years from 1922 to 1938, the longest period so far on record.

Classification of Records.

Shortly after Abdul Ali's assumption of office, the Government of India felt that their records should, if possible, be weeded once again with a view to eliminating the useless, and to providing documents of more permanent value better conditions of storage and preservation. A Sub-Committee consisting of three eminent members of the Indian Historical Records Commission, H. E. A. Cotton, Jadunath Sarkar and Rushbrook Williams, was appointed to report on this important subject. The Committee devoted much time and considerable labour to the examination of pre-Mutiny records and condemned a good proportion of them as of no historical value or administrative utility. The learned members were definitely of opinion that the pre-Mutiny records should be carefully scrutinised and divided into three classes— (A) those of permanent value, (B) those of secondary interest and (C) those of no historical or administrative use whatever. The papers

of the last category were to be ultimately destroyed while A and B class papers were to be permanently preserved and press-listed. They framed a set of rules for the guidance of the scrutinisers and recommended the appointment of a Standing Local Sub-Committee to co-operate with the Keeper of Records in this complex operation. The Standing Local Sub-Committee suggested that condemned documents might more profitably be transferred to the custody of learned institutions. The Indian Historical Records Commission, however, was opposed to the transfer of any old papers and recommended their preservation in the Imperial Record Department. When the classification was completed, the Government were confronted with two practical problems: (i) separation of B and C class papers would inevitably affect the integrity of the original series and (ii) assessment of the potential or even the present value of historical records would be difficult, as was demonstrated by the requisitioning on several occasions of papers relegated to C class or weeded out long ago by the administrative departments for their routine work. The Commission therefore reiterated its resolution against any interference with any class of pre-Mutiny papers (1939). Costly and laborious as the classification work had proved, its lesson was well worth the price. Tea and tobacco, wine and coffee may be successfully sampled but archives stand in a class by themselves; here sampling with negative result may be entirely misleading. The law of average does not hold good in every case and it pointedly brought home the inconvenient fact often ignored by men at the top that it is easy to destroy seemingly useless records but it is impossible to resurrect them if wanted later.

In 1921 the Indian Historical Records Commission had recommended the publication of a series of monographs on Indian history. As a first step in this direction, Dodwell's *Sepoy Recruitment in the Old Madras Army* was published in 1922. In 1924 the *Consolidated Index to the Press-lists of the Public Department Proceedings* (completed in 1920) saw the light. *The Handbook to the Records of the Government of India* 1748-1859 appeared in the following year. During Abdul Ali's regime two volumes of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* were placed before the public, the fourth (1772-75) in 1925 and the fifth (1776-80) in 1930, while the sixth volume was made ready for the press.

Transfer of records to New Delhi.

The capital of India had been transferred from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911 and it was inevitable that the official records would in part or whole go to the new headquarters. The administration could not possibly be run without reference to current records but Abdul Ali apprehended that the transfer of the more brittle older records could not be effected without disaster. The climate of the new capital was also a source of grave anxiety to him, for the variation in temperature and humidity was both violent and extreme. But the Government had already made up their mind as early as 1913 and the present building was completed in 1926. To unsettle a settled fact was well-nigh impossible and so the Keeper of Records suggested a compromise. The Department might have a branch at New Delhi to cater to the current needs of the administration but the historical records might be spared the risks of a nine hundred-mile journey and left at their original repository. During the period of transition in any case such an arrangement was inevitable and many ardent students of old

records strongly advocated the suggested course. The Government did not accept the proposal for permanent retention of older records in Calcutta but agreed to make their journey as safe as possible. The branch office was opened at Delhi on 1 November 1926 but the transfer of the pre-Mutiny papers was not completed till March 1937. The temporary bisection of the records establishment could not but cause considerable dislocation of its normal work; the process of transfer had necessarily to be slow as precautions had to be taken against likely damage and the transport charges had to be kept as low as possible. From 1937 the records of the Government of India found a permanent home at the new metropolis and the Imperial Record Department quietly settled down to its scheduled work.

But the economic slump of the thrities proved an insuperable difficulty to the official custodian of the archives. The non-productive departments of the Government are ordinarily the first victims of retrenchment and the Imperial Record Department proved no exception. It contributed nothing to the public coffers and had to suffer consequently. The repairing work had to be greatly reduced, though the destructive forces of nature could not be held in check for ever and the insect pests could not be put on ration for an indefinite period.

A. F. M. Abdul Ali retired from service on 1 December 1938. C. Singer, a Superintendent in the Department of Education, Health and Lands officiated until a permanent incumbent was found. During the brief five months of his stewardship the *Staff Manual* was revised and the sixth volume of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (1781-85) was published.

To speak of present company is exceedingly embarrassing and Abdul Ali's successor still continues in office.

S. N. Sen.

Dr. Surendranath Sen was educated at Dacca College where three of his distinguished predecessors, Hill, Wilson and Hallward taught at different times. He was a pupil of Professor R. B. Ramsbotham and must have been infected by his teacher's enthusiasm for archival work. He began his career in the Provincial Education Service of the Central Provinces where, it is interesting to note, Hill spent his last Indian years. Sen visited the records offices of Calcutta, Goa, London, Paris and Lisbon in search of his raw materials and by a curious coincidence the young man destined to be the last Keeper of the Records of the British Indian Government met the first Officer-in-Charge of Records at Iffley (Oxford) a week before the veteran passed away. The new appointment probably means a reversion to the old policy, for, at the time of his appointment Sen occupied the Asutosh Chair of Mediaeval and Modern Indian History at Calcutta and was Honorary Adviser on Records to the Government of Bengal.

At the same time a new appointment in the Department of Education, Health and Lands indicated a similar change of policy. The Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, under whom the Keeper of Records worked, was usually a superannuated Provincial Director of Public Instruction. Such persons were not likely to bring much energy to their new office and certainly did not bring a fresh outlook to bear upon its numerous problems. In 1938 however a departure from the past practice was made and Mr. John Philip Sargent, who had done good work in his country, was recruited direct from England. Thus two men without any

previous association with the Government of India were brought together as Educational Commissioner and Keeper of the Records. The new Keeper considered himself a loyal servant of the Indian Historical Records Commission of which he was formerly a corresponding member and the new Educational Commissioner was anxious to give the recommendations of the Commission a fair trial.

Records thrown open for research.

In December 1939, the Government of India decided to throw open their records to *bona fide* research students. The question had been under consideration for nearly three decades. In 1910 the Secretary of State for India suggested that the rules regulating access to official records in India might be brought into line with those prevailing in the India Office. The suggestion was turned down on political grounds but the India Office kept on pressing their point of view. Sometimes a provincial government vetoed the innovation." On other occasions it was a department of the Government of India that proved hostile. Mr. Scholfield did not favour the proposed change.* But public opinion was steadily gaining in strength and in 1938 the *ex-officio* President of the Indian Historical Records Commission promised to review the position once again. Soon after his assumption of office the new Keeper was called upon to give his views

* "The argument from the records in the India Office, is specious. If the records in London are the same as those in Calcutta, the public is different. It may be well to state here that there has never been any wide-felt want, any loud or insistent demand for the throwing open of the records. And the reason is clear. There is in India no aristocracy of erudition, no school of history; historical research, scientific use of evidence, critical scholarship are barely understood and seldom achieved."

on this long-drawn controversy. He thought that the time was ripe for liberalising the existing rules and the Educational Commissioner concurred. The Government accepted their recommendation on condition that the Keeper of Records would be held personally responsible for any misuse of the proposed privileges. The rules were accordingly revised in 1940, and 352 students have since taken advantage of the facilities thus offered but so far there has not been a single case of bad faith or malafide action and there has not been any occasion to restrict admission to the Research Room, though 94,372 pages of excerpts have been released. During the critical years of the war mild restraint and that too temporary, was sometimes commended but restriction—never.

Laboratory started and mechanisation of Preservation Section decided upon.

In 1940 a competent chemist was recruited to take charge of the Preservation Branch of the Department. He started with a serious handicap. The earlier retrenchment had caused a huge accumulation of arrears in repair work and 20,000 volumes stood in urgent need of rebinding. A five-year rebinding programme sanctioned by the Government in 1939 had to be abandoned owing to war-time scarcity of binding materials. The Technical Assistant had not even an apology for a laboratory and yet, suitable substitutes had to be found for many chemicals formerly in use. A small sum was eventually granted for a laboratory but the excellent work done there soon convinced the Government that further expansion was not only necessary but essential. Later, it was decided to mechanise the repairing work as far as possible but import of the necessary apparatus was held up by contingencies of war. When an up-to-date microfilming camera was purchased as an insurance

measure, no room could be found for its installation and for years it remained idle. The Preservation Section had necessarily to limit itself to the most urgent cases of repair and flattening of folded documents. With the restoration of peace, steps have been taken to make up the leeway and laminating and fumigating plants are already on their way across the Pacific. But the war-time record is not altogether discreditable. In all, 1,655,271 sheets of documents have been repaired, 1,825 volumes have been rebound, 14,934 bundles and volumes have been fumigated, 60,250 bound volumes have been treated with leather preservative despite distressing lack of repairing materials. Since 1941, nearly 1,900,000 folded sheets have been flattened. Earlier, an insecticide paper was invented and a new method of repairing palm-leaf manuscripts was evolved in the laboratory.

Training in archives-keeping.

The reorganisation of the Preservation Branch brought to the notice of the Department another crying need, that of trained technicians. Archives Offices were confessedly few but trained archivists were fewer still and if any improvement was to be effected, suitable training must be provided for those who wanted to take up archives-keeping as a profession. Accordingly the Government of India approved of a training scheme and the Department admitted a few nominees of the Provincial and State Governments to the newly-instituted Diploma Course (August 1943). In 1946 the syllabus was revised and forwarded to several foreign experts of international fame for their comment and criticism. The revised syllabus met with a large measure of approval from all quarters and from the present year arrangement has been made for awarding two stipends of Rs. 100/- each

per month to deserving trainees. So far, 18 trainees have been awarded the diploma of whom 12 came from the States and the rest from the provinces.

The Indian Archives.

Archivists are concerned only with the papers in their own custody; at best, they can furnish outsiders with technical information when sought, but obviously they cannot properly look after manuscripts in other people's keeping. In the greater interest of private archives, therefore, it is necessary that their custodians should have a working knowledge of the elementary principles of storage and preservation and however thorough their training, the professional archivists also require the latest literature on their subject but it is not always within easy reach. Some medium of instruction and information had therefore to be found to meet the needs of the layman as well as the specialist. It was therefore decided that the Imperial Record Department should publish a quarterly journal that would at the same time bring out the results of researches done in the country as well as reprint interesting articles from foreign periodicals. It was not possible to give immediate effect to this decision on account of adverse circumstances brought about by the War. The publication of the *Indian Archives* was however taken in hand without any additional staff and so far three issues have been published.

Publications.

When their records were thrown open to *bona fide* students, the Government tacitly but inevitably committed themselves to a policy of removing existing obstacles to research. In the first place, it was expected that manuscript materials should be available in print so that students working outside the records office might also be able to utilise the original sources.

Secondly, necessary reference media were to be supplied to render the search work as easy as practicable. Accordingly, a five-year publication programme with a view to printing and publishing a total number of 39 volumes was prepared and sanctioned in 1942, and two volumes of *Index to Land Revenue Records* from 1830 to 1859, the shortest series in the possession of the Department, were prepared and printed. These two volumes were found to be exceptionally useful by well-known Indian scholars to whom they were referred and the Government decided to index the late Foreign and Political Department's pre-Mutiny records on the same lines. An extra staff of eight was appointed for this specific purpose and the first volume of the new index is now ready. When completed, the new index will supersede the existing calendars, press-lists and other works of reference. Under the five-year publication scheme typescripts of 19 volumes of Fort William and East India House Correspondence have been distributed among the editors, out of which five volumes have been made ready for the Press, and one volume of Bengali records and one volume of Sanskrit records have been published under Dr. Sen's editorship, while Thevenot and Careri's *Indian Travels* has been sent to the Press. Of the old publications, Volume VII of the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* was out in 1940; Volumes VIII and IX were completed by June 1944 but they could not be published for lack of paper and printing facilities during the war. Volume X of the same series is now nearly complete. Besides these, *A Manual of Rules Regulating Access to Archives in India and Europe* was compiled and published in 1940 for the benefit of research students.

Nor did the Department fail to extend its expert services to the States and provinces. It was announced that provinces,

Services of the Keeper of Records and the mending staff made available to States and provinces.

States and Residencies might requisition the services of the Government of India's Keeper of Records whenever necessary and full advantage has been taken of this offer. In 1939 the Government of Bombay asked him to inspect the records in the Alienation Office at Poona and advise them as to the best methods of preservation. At the instance of His Excellency the Crown Representative, he inspected and reported on the central and crown records in the custody of the Governments of Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madras and the United Provinces and also advised the Governments of Mysore, Jaipur and Alwar as well as the Residency at Mount Abu about the reorganisation of their respective records offices. An expert mender was sent to Bikaner and Abu with a view to reconditioning fragile manuscripts and training the local mending staff at the invitation of the authorities concerned, and technical information has been supplied to private individuals, public servants and learned institutions whenever called for. Above all, contact has been established with archivists and archives offices in Europe and America.

The Department has steadily expanded since its inception in 1891. Sir George Forrest started with a modest staff of 9; the present strength of the technical and administrative staff is 182* and even this is not sufficient for all the obligations the Department has undertaken during the last nine years. Last year it had to answer the enquiries and cater to the needs of 107 students, supply 23,902 requisitions, write 11,558 letters, restore 13,302 papers and repair 125,548 sheets.

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* *See* Appendix I.

The work is steadily mounting in volume from year to year; with the passing away of the old order the responsibilities of the Department have enormously increased. During the last nine years it was called upon to rescue the Bombay Military records and the North-West Frontier Province records, for, they were of no use to the local Governments and had been consequently condemned for destruction. The North-West Frontier Province records have gone back to their original home but the records of the Bombay Command are still in the National Archives. It has now been faced with unexpected accessions from defunct Residencies and Political Agencies, while the Ministry of States, heir and successor to the Political Department, have decided to transfer a million of its files to the National Archives.

Such in brief is the history of the National Archives of India. It has no politics. Its sole aim is to serve the country irrespective of the character of the government of the day. Its business is to cater to the needs of the research students and to preserve for posterity one of its most cherished heritages—the written records of the country's past. Conscious of its present shortcomings, aware of its past failures and fully alive to its future responsibilities, the National Archives is sustained in its efforts to forge ahead by its unfailing faith in its lofty ideal. So long as it strives to serve the country, it will deserve well of the nation.

A Note on the Contents of the National Archives of India

Standing in isolation, removed from the bustle of the Central Secretariat, the National Archives of India quietly and unostentatiously holds its precious store of records in trust for the nation and strives its best to provide optimum conditions for their safe storage. Unknown to many except perhaps by a name which the style of its architecture suggested to popular imagination, it has so long been the butt of all ridicule for its unremunerative activities; yet it boasts of being the guardian of a huge mass of records which, besides being immensely useful for purposes of current administration, "are probably the best historical material in the world" and form an important part of the nation's cultural heritage. The steel shelves of the Department house about 61,000 bound volumes and 29,000 bundles of unbound documents, covering about 14 miles of shelf space. The number is steadily increasing by annual accessions and the Department is already hard put to it for want of sufficient accommodation.

The regular series of records begins from 1748 but there are interesting collections relating to earlier years. In theory, the Department is to receive for custody all records of the Government of India which are five years old and have therefore ceased to be required for frequent consultation and reference but in practice only a fraction of such records has found its way to its permanent habitat. While some of the Departments have been unwilling to part with their records, this office

also has not been over-anxious to receive them as the problem of housing would have been difficult to tackle. The political records after 1880 and the military records subsequent to 1893 are still with those departments. It will be noticed that since the time of Forrest no accession of records under the latter head has been registered. Even in respect of the other departments, the time-limit has not been meticulously observed.

The records of the attached and subordinate offices of the Government of India are more voluminous than those of the administrative departments but most of these offices still retain their own papers. Among the few such offices which have transferred their records mention may be made of the Central Board of Revenue, the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, Directorate General, Posts and Telegraphs and the Survey of India. The Department is not unmindful of the value of these records and has been collecting full information regarding them and expects to take them over as soon as it has been able to solve its problem of space. The question of accommodation has already been taken up but in the meantime, apart from the routine accessions of Departmental records, the records of the defunct Residencies and Political Agencies have started pouring in and are being squeezed into already crowded stacks. Arrangement is also being made for reception of Political Department records up to 1900, transfer of which has already been decided upon.

It is not possible within the compass of a few pages to attempt even a brief account of the most valuable documents in the custody of the National Archives of India. The bulk of them is naturally in English but there is hardly any important oriental language which is not represented among the official records of the East India Company. Hence students of

philology and linguistics also may find interest in records of admittedly historical character. No civilised country is to-day isolated from the world outside and India's contact with other lands and races is naturally reflected in her archives which throw ample light on their history. Nor are they limited to purely political or commercial transactions. Some of these papers refer to botanical, geological and anthropological investigations and experiments undertaken under the auspices of the Government of India. Very recently the "dead" records of the Survey of India have been transferred to the custody of the National Archives of India and a preliminary examination confirms the expectation that they are replete with hitherto unexploited materials in which both students of history and geography will be equally interested as they form a unique record of the technical work of the Survey, well known for its discoveries and accurate trigonometrical mapping of previously unknown regions in and about India. An exhibition representing the varied and variegated assets of the National Archives of India has been organised for the Silver Jubilee Session and the catalogue of the exhibits will serve as an adequate introduction in this connection. Here we shall attempt to attract the readers' attention only to a few fragments of our heirlooms.

To start with the records of foreign interest, the story of the emigration of Indian labourers to colonial plantations along with that of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean can be studied in vivid details in the records of the Home and Foreign Series. The documents in the Home Public Series from 1755 onwards provide instances of Indian slaves being exported, which was really part of an international traffic operating from

Madagascar in the West to Macao in the East. The East India Company itself in its far eastern settlements was employer of slave labour. The Land Revenue Records 1830-59, an exhaustive index to which has been published in 2 volumes in 1940-41, abound with information about the employment of American cotton planters, Chinese tea planters and Italian sericulturists in India a century ago. Needless to say that materials for all the Asian wars conducted by England and financed by India, for instance the Afghan wars and the Opium war, are available in plenty in the different branches of Foreign Department records. The Medal and Prize Rolls and the Bombay Adjutant-General's correspondence stacked with our Military records, relate to campaigns in Ceylon, Java, China, Afghanistan and even Egypt and Crimea outside the geographical limits of Asia. The Foreign Miscellaneous Series contains a number of highly interesting manuscript reports and journals on some of the neighbouring Asian countries. Quite a number of them relate to Central Asia and the Middle East, as for many years British diplomacy was notoriously suspicious of Russia. Thus we have in the same volume Veterinary Surgeon William Moorcroft's Report on the Russian Trade on the North-Western Frontier of India (1812) and Consular Officer Henry Willock's Account of the State of Persia (1825) conveyed in the form of a letter addressed direct to the British Foreign Minister, George Canning. In a report dated 1833 and running over more than 1,000 foolscap sheets Alexander Burnes, the noted Central Asian explorer, who later lost his life during the Afghan rising at Kabul in 1841, submitted a detailed survey of the countries between India and Asiatic Russia in which commercial, political and military questions were treated with

equal emphasis. There are two small treatises, both dated 1840, one containing Arthur Conolly's journal of a journey between Kabul and Merv and the other James Abbott's report of a mission to Khiva. Conolly was one of the Company's officers well known for Central Asian travels and had brought out the experience of his overland journey from England to India in 1834. He subsequently took part in the Afghan Campaign (1840) and went to Khiva as British envoy. The manuscript in the Foreign Miscellaneous Series is of special interest for it may be the last journal of his travels as he was executed in captivity in Khiva in 1842. As a contemporary account of Bokhara Conolly's journal is of considerable importance. Abbott's report on Khiva was later on incorporated in his *Journey to Khiva* (Lond. 1845). The documents relating to the consequences of the first Afghan war are not less interesting than those relating to its origin. A minor episode in the sequence was the memorial of Munshi Mohan Lal for reimbursement on account of supplies provided for the British Army at Kabul. There is a bundle in the Foreign Miscellaneous Series containing the memorial and the original papers relating to Mohan Lal's claims. Mohan Lal was a Kashmiri Pandit educated at the English School at Delhi. An adventurous youth, he was an indispensable element in the Central Asian explorations undertaken by the Company's officials. He was an attaché to the British Agency during the first Afghan war and was responsible for rescuing a number of English officials after the debacle of 1841. His books in English rank along with those of Burnes and Conolly as authorities on Central Asia in the mid-nineteenth century. These papers in the National Archives of India clearly bear out Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's comment that the shabby treatment

meted out to Mohan Lal reveals in lurid light the sense of 'gratitude' of the East India Company and its servants in India.

Documents relating to Further India, Eastern Archipelago and China are also available in equal abundance. Among the reports and treatises in the Foreign Miscellaneous Series may be mentioned Major Symes's report on the embassy to Ava (1803), report on the Emperor of Ava's embassy to Cochin China (1822), Anderson's History of the East Coast of Sumatra (1823) and the Canton correspondence (1831-32). Michael Symes was twice sent to the court of Ava, first by Sir John Shore in 1795 and for a second time by Lord Wellesley in 1803. The second mission was specially undertaken to detect and counteract any French attempt after the peace of Amiens to gain a foothold in Burma. The report is thus of interest to Indian, Burmese, British and French students alike. The Burmese embassy to Cochin China in 1822 was a curious move, particularly because the leader of the embassy was not a native of Burma. The leader George Gibson was a Eurasian from South India. Besides being a storehouse of information for the cultural, social and political history of Cochin China, Gibson's report provides valuable account of the early French adventurers in that country. John Anderson's treatise on Sumatra, though incomplete, is of interest, being the draft of a portion of his now classic work *Mission to Sumatra* (Edin. 1826). The Canton correspondence contains highly interesting letters, official notices, proclamations, cuttings from the *Canton Register* and sundry other documents for the years 1831-32, which throw light on the political, commercial and social history of the period. The National Archives of India is the proud owner of one of the biggest collections of English

documents on China and Anglo-Chinese relations. Besides the different regular series of records (*e.g.*, Secret or Political) which include detailed accounts of Chinese affairs, there is a separate section known as China Papers. These are tacked in 12 bundles (now 9) and relate to the Opium war and its aftermath. The Secret Series for the year 1853 (July 29) throw a flood of light on the Taiping rebellion, its causes, progress and ideology.

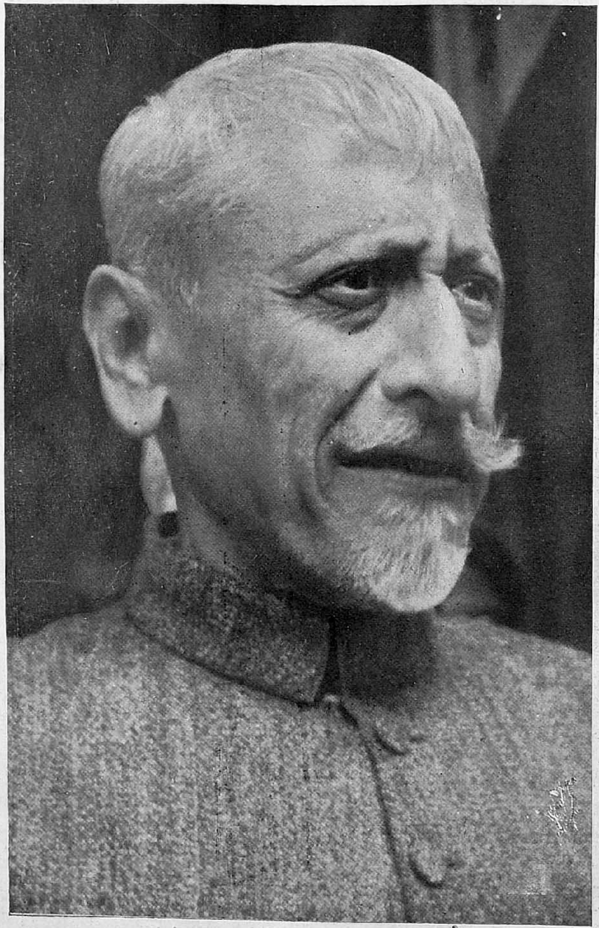
Attention may be drawn to the notable series of correspondence between the Indian rulers and the Company's servants. Persian being the court language in most of the Indian States a large portion of the letters are in that tongue. Besides Persian, we have letters in Arabic, Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, Burmese, Chinese, Siamese, and Tibetan. But letters not belonging to any particular correspondence series are not necessarily devoid of interest. We have a letter in Latin from Joseph II, the enlightened despot of Austria, to Haidar Ali of Mysore. This document seems to have come into the Company's possession on the fall of Seringapatam in 1799. We have a letter in Russian from the Czar to the Huzrat of Khiva (1837) which seems to have been intercepted by some English official or his local agent engaged in anti-Russian operations on the eve of the first Afghan war. Two isolated volumes contain the correspondence that passed between Baji Rao, the deposed Peshwa, in exile at Bithur and the English commissioners attached to him from 1826 to 1832.

Documents of technical and scientific interest are found both in the Home and Foreign series. A Home Public paper of 1791 has preserved for posterity four samples of flannel dyed with Andaman, Coromondal, Siam and Brazil woods. Another Home Public paper records the proceedings of a committee set

PLATE I

H.E. C. Rajagopalachari
Photo : Govind Lal, Delhi

PLATE II

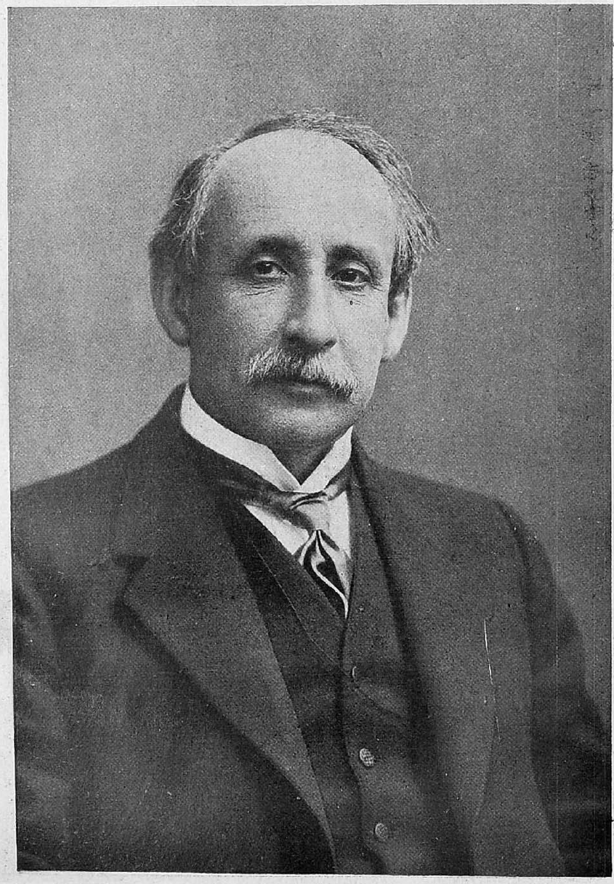


Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

PLATE III

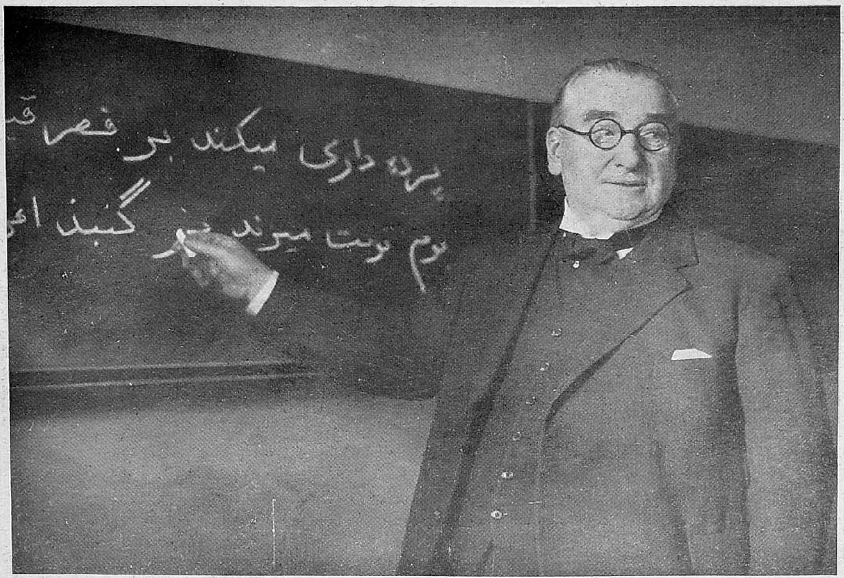
Sir George Forrest
Photo : Elliot & Fry
Courtesy : Mrs. Dorothy Harlow, Oxford

PLATE IV



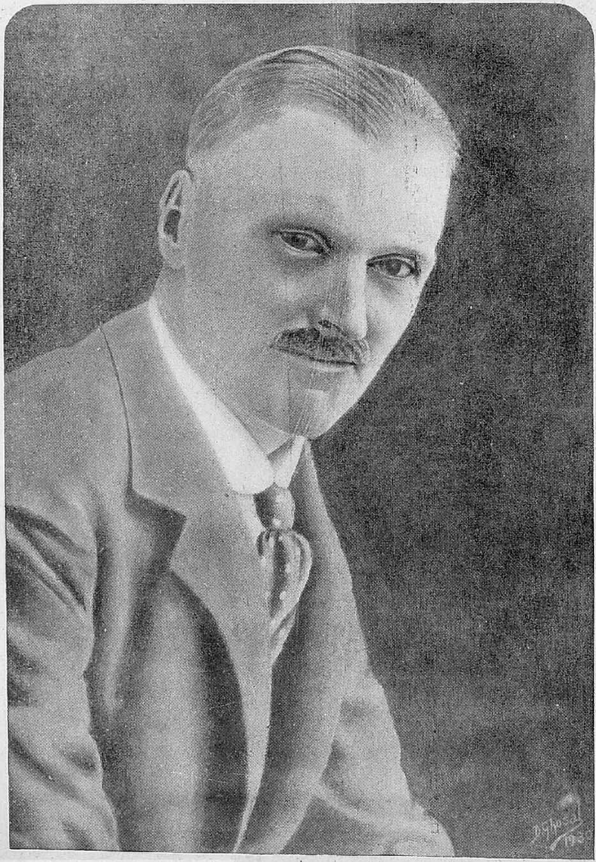
S. C. Hill
Courtesy : Sir George Hill

PLATE V



Sir E. Denison Ross
Courtesy : School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London

PLATE VI



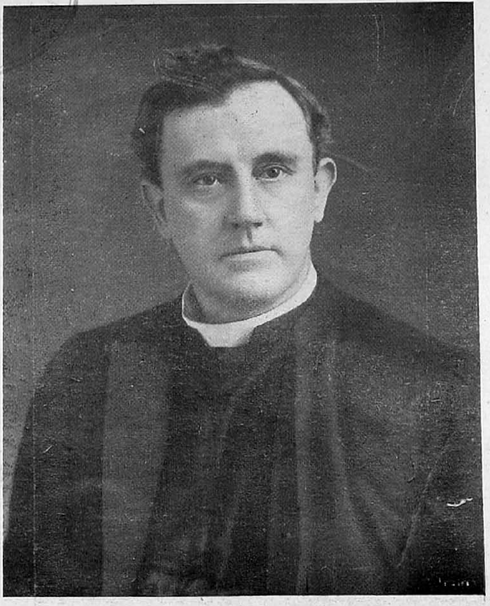
R. B. Ramsbotham
Portrait : D. Ghoshal
Courtesy : Presidency College, Calcutta

Sir William Foster

H. H. Dodwell

Courtesy : School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London

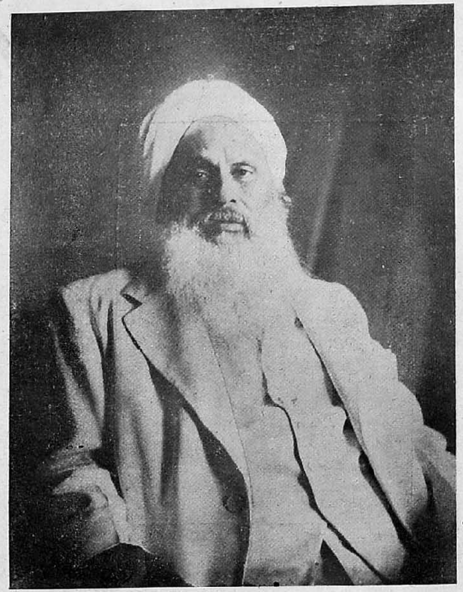
Sir Jadunath Sarkar



Ven. Arch. W. K. Firminger
Photo : Bourne & Shepherd, Calcutta

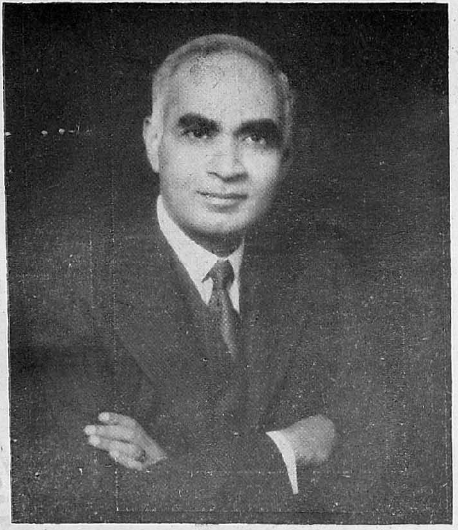
Nawabzada A. F. M. Abdul Ali

Sir Evan Cotton

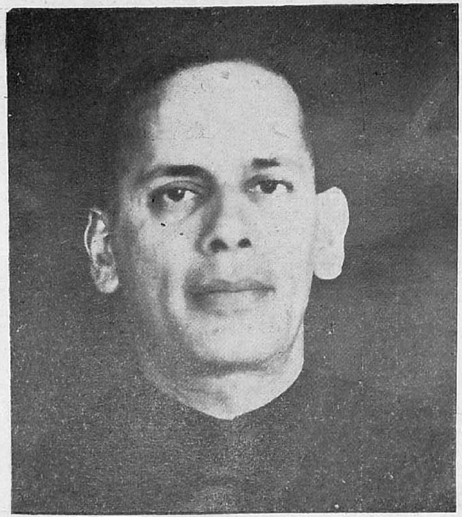


Sir Jogendra Singh

Nalini Ranjan Sarkar



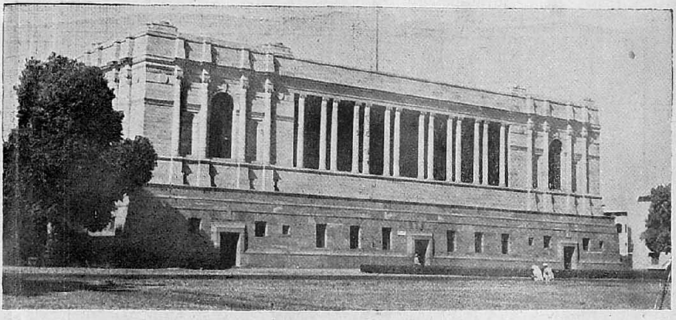
Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai



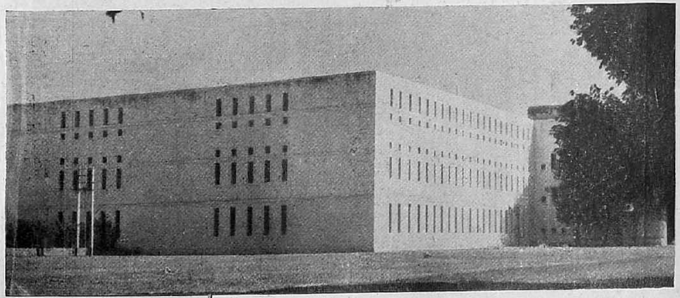
Sir Shafa'at Ahmad Khan

PLATE XVII

Sir John Sargent

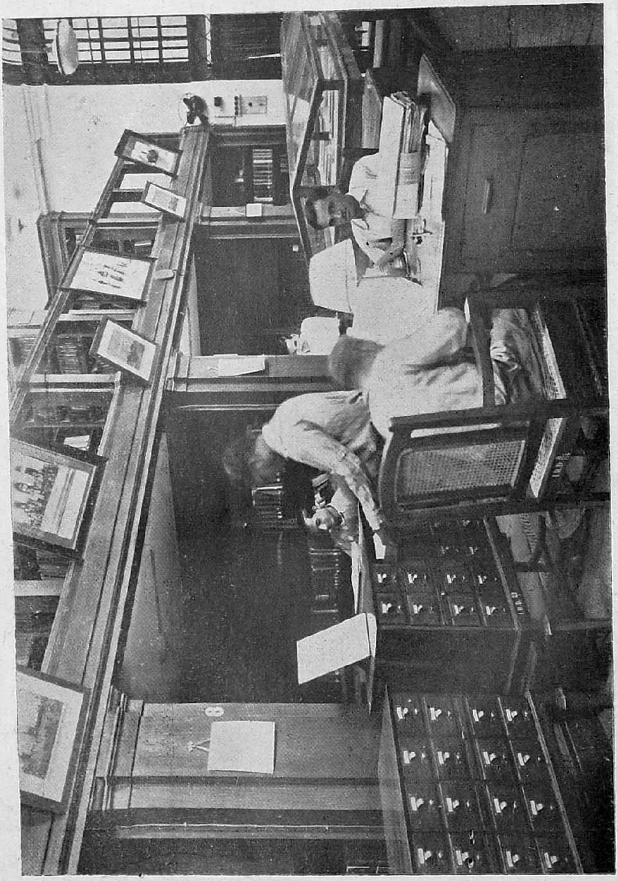


National Archives of India
Front view



National Archives of India
Back and side view showing the outside of the stack area

PLATE XX

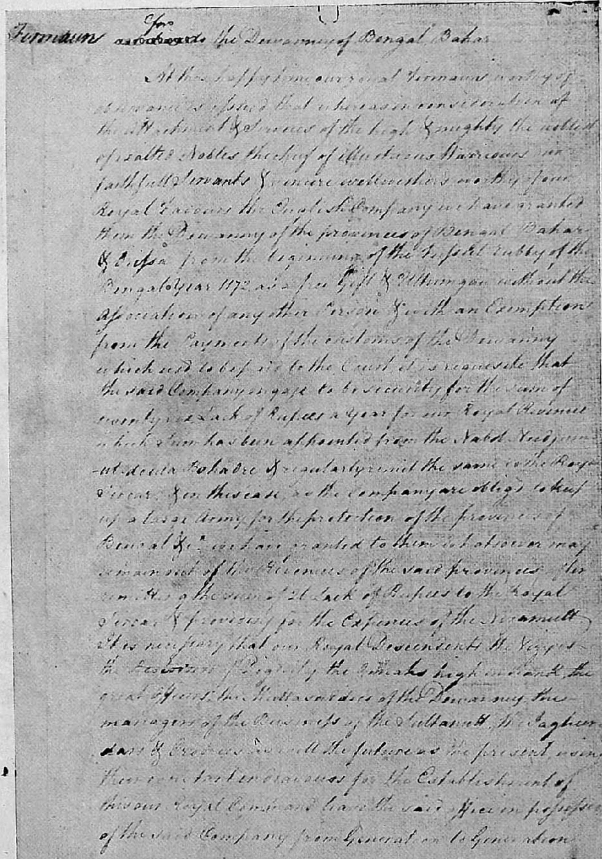


National Archives of India
Search room

National Archives of India

A section of the stacks and the slatted gangway

PLATE XXII

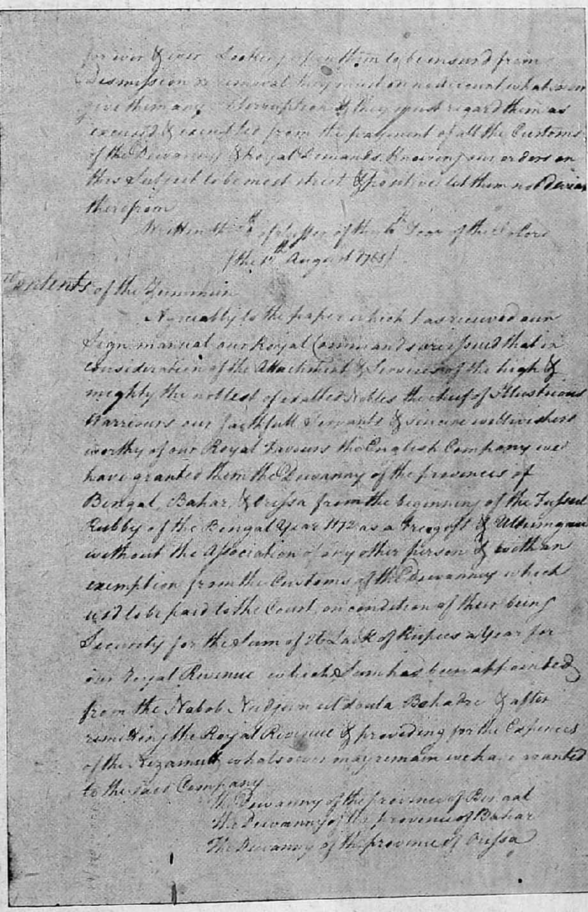


Firmaun for the Dewanny of Bengal Bahar

At this happy time our royal Firmaun worthy of obedience is issued that whereas in consideration of the Attachment & Services of the high & mighty the noblest of exalted Nobles the chief of illustrious Warriours our faithfull Servants & sincere wellwishers worthy of our Royal Favours the English Company we have granted them the Dewanny of the provinces of Bengal Bahar & Orissa from the beginning of the Fussel Rubby of the Bengal Year 1172 as a free Gift & Ultumgau without the Association of any other Person & with an Exemption from the Payment of the customs of the Dewanny which used to be paid to the Court it is requisite that the said Company engage to be security for the sum of twenty six Lack of Rupees a year for our Royal Revenue which sum has been appointed from the Nabob Nudjum-ul-dowla Bahadre & regularly remit the same to the Royal Sircar. & in this case as the company are obliged to keep up a large Army for the protection of the provinces of Bengal &c. we have granted to them whatsoever may remain out of the Revenues of the said provinces after remitting the sum of 26 Lack of Rupees to the Royal Sircar & providing for the Expences of the Nizamutt. It is necessary that our Royal Descendants the Vizzers the Bestowers of Dignity the Omrahs high in rank the great officers the Muttasuddees of the Dewanny the managers of the Business of the Sultanutt the Jagheerdars & Croories as well the future as the present using their constant endeavours for the Establishment of this our Royal Command leave the said office in possession of the said Company from Generation to Generation

National Archives of India

Contemporary English rendering of Farman granting the Diwani to the East India Company, 12th August 1765 (page 1)



for ever & ever Leakee [illegible] them to be insured from Dismission or removal [illegible] on no account whatsoever give them any Interruption & they must regard them as excused & exempted from the payment of all the Customs of the Dewanny & Royal Demands. Knowing our orders on this Subject to be most strict & positive let them not deviate therefrom

Written the [illegible] of Suffer of the [illegible] Year of the [illegible]
(the 12th August 1765)

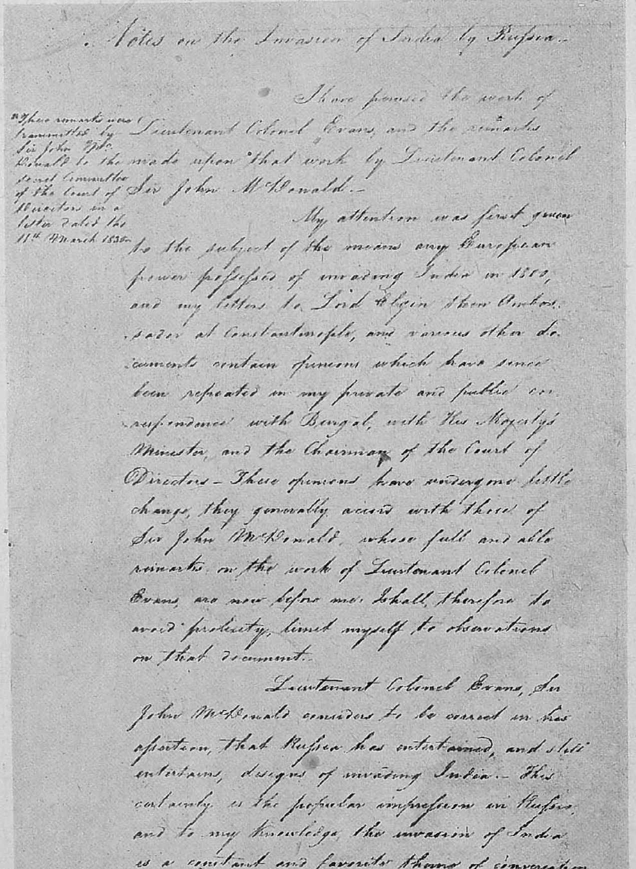
Contents of the Zimmun

Agreeably to the paper which has received our Sign manual our Royal Commands are issued that in Consideration of the Attachment & Services of the high & mighty the noblest of exalted Nobles the chief of Illustrious Warriours our faithfull Servants & sincere wellwishers worthy of our Royal favours the English Company we have granted them the Dewanny of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, & Orissa from the beginning of the Fussul Rubby of the Bengal Year 1172 as a free gift & Ultumgau without the Association of any other person & with an exemption from the Customs of the Dewanny which used to be paid to the Court, on condition of their being Security for the Sum of 26 Lack of Rupees a Year for our Royal Revenue which Sum has been appointed from the Nabob Nudjum ul Doula Bahadre & after remitting the Royal Revenue & providing for the Expences of the Nizamut whatsoever may remain we have granted to the said Company

The Dewanny of the province of Bengal
The Dewanny of the province of Bahar
The Dewanny of the province of Orissa

National Archives of India
Farman granting Diwani (page 2)

Plate XXIV



Notes on the Invasion of India by Russia.

*These remarks were transmitted by Sir John McDonald to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors in a letter dated the 11th March 1830.

I have perused the work of Lieutenant Colonel Evans, and the remarks* made upon that work by Lieutenant Colonel Sir John McDonald.

My attention was first given to the subject of the means any European power possessed of invading India in 1800, and my letters to Lord Elgin then Ambassador at Constantinople, and various other documents contain opinions which have since been repeated in my private and public correspondence with Bengal, with His Majesty's Ministers, and the Chairman of the Court of Directors. These opinions have undergone little change, they generally accord with those of Sir John McDonald, whose full and able remarks on the work of Lieutenant Colonel Evans, are now before me. I shall, therefore to avoid prolixity, limit myself to observations on that document.

Lieutenant Colonel Evans, Sir John McDonald considers to be correct in his assertion, that Russia has entertained, and still entertains, designs of invading India. This certainly is the popular impression in Russia, and to my knowledge, the invasion of India is a constant and favorite theme of conversation

and

National Archives of India

Sir John Malcolm's note on the possibility of Russian invasion of India, 11th March 1830

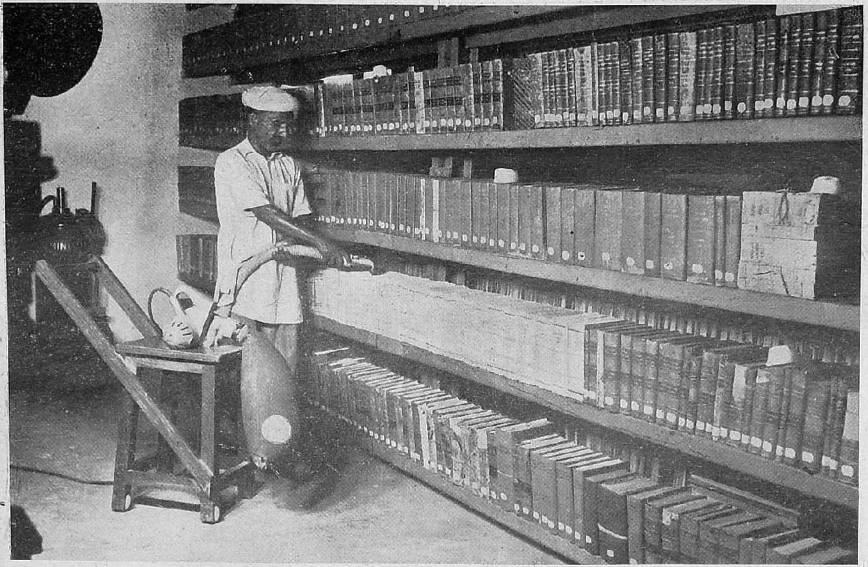
اشتہار

ایک مسافر وارد حال شہر کانپور جو کہ کلکتہ سی آیا تھا سنا گیا کہ کارتوسون کی تقسیم سی پہلی واسطی لینی دین اور مذہب ہندستانیونکے
کونسل ہوئی صاحبان کونسل کی یہہ رای ٹھہری کہ چونکہ یہہ مقدمہ دین کا ہی اسمین سات آٹھہ ہزار گورہ و انگریز کام آوینگا اور پچاس
ہزار ہندستانی قتل ہوکا تب کل ہندستانی کرسٹان ہوجاوینگا اسمضمون کی عرضی ملکہ وکٹوریہ کی خدمت مین بہیجی گئی ہانسی
منظوری آئی پہر دوبارہ کونسل ہوی اور انگریزی سوداگر بہی شریک کونسل کی کئی گئی یہہ تجویز ہوا کہ واسطی مدد کی سپاہ گورہ اسقدر
مرحمت ہو کہ جسقدر فوج ہندستانی ہی کہ مبادا بر وقت فتنہ بلند ہونے کی ہار نجاوین جب یہہ عرضی ولایت مین پڑہی گئی
دہان سی [illegible] ہزار گورہ بہت جلدی جہازون پر سوار ہوکر روانہ ہندستان ہوی اور اونکی روانگی کی خبر کلکتہ مین آئی
صاحبان کلکتہ نی واسطی بانٹنی کارتوسون کی حکم جاری کیا کہ اصل مطلب اوس سی کرسٹان کرنا فوج ہندستانی کا تہا کہ
جب فوج کرسٹان ہوجاوی گی تب رعایا کی کرسٹان کرنی مین دیر نہوگی اور کارتوسون پر سور اور گای کی چربی ملی ہوئی تہی
یہہ حال باتی بنگالیون کی جو کارتوس بنانی پر متعین تہی معلوم ہوا چنانچہ اسبات کی ظاہر کرنیوالون سی ایک شخص جان سی
مارڈالا گیا اور باقی سب قید ہوئی یہان یہہ اپنی تدبیرین کرتی تہی وہان یہہ خبر وکیل سلطان روم نی لندن سی اپنی سلطان
پاس بہیجی کہ یہان سی [illegible] ہزار گورہ واسطی کرسٹان کرنی ہندستانیونکی روانہ ہندستان کی ہوی سلطان روم خلد اللہ ملکہ نی
بادشاہ مصر کی نام فرمان جاری کیا خلاصہ اوسکا یہہ ہی کہ تم ملکہ وکٹوریہ سی سازش کئی ہوی ہو یہہ وقت صلح کا نہین ہے کیونکہ ہماری وکیل
کی لکہی سی معلوم ہوا کہ [illegible] ہزار فوج گورہ واسطی کرسٹان کرنی رعایا اور فوج ہندستانکی روانہ ہندستان کو ہوئی ہے پس اسصورت
مین اوسکا تدارک ممکن ہے اگر ہم غفلت کرینگی تو خدا کو کیا منہ دکہا دینگی اور یہہ دن اکروز ہماری بہی آگی آنیوالا ہی کیونکہ اگر انگریز
ہندستانیون کو کرسٹان کرلینگی تو ہماری ملک کا بہی قصد کرینگی جب یہہ فرمان سلطان روم مصر کی بادشاہ پاس پہونچا والی مصر نے
قبل پہونچنی فوج گورہ کی انتظام و اجتماع اپنی فوج شہر اسکندریہ مین کیا کیونکہ وہی راہ آمد ہندستان کی ہی مجرد پہونچنی فوج گورون
کی فوج بادشاہ مصر نی چارون طرف سی توپین مارنا شروع کین اور جہازونکو توڑ تاڑ کر ڈبو دیا کہ ایک گورہ بہی اون مین سے
باقی نربا انگریزان کلکتہ بعد جاری کرنی حکم کاٹنی کارتوس کی اور بلند ہونی اس فتنہ و فساد کی منتظر مدد فوج لندن کی
تہی کہ حق تعالی نی اپنی قدرت کاملہ سی وہین پہلی ہی اونکا کام تمام کیا جب خبر قتل ہونی فوج لندن کی معلوم ہوئی تب
گورنر جنرل نی بہت رنج و غم کیا اور اپنا سر پیٹا + سر شب سر قتل و تاراج داشت + سحرگہ نہ تن سر نہ سر تاج داشت +
بیک گردش چرخ نیلوفری + نہ نادر بجا ماند و نی نادری + حسب الحکم پیشوا بہادر طبع شد [illegible] ذیقعدہ سنہ [illegible]

National Archives of India

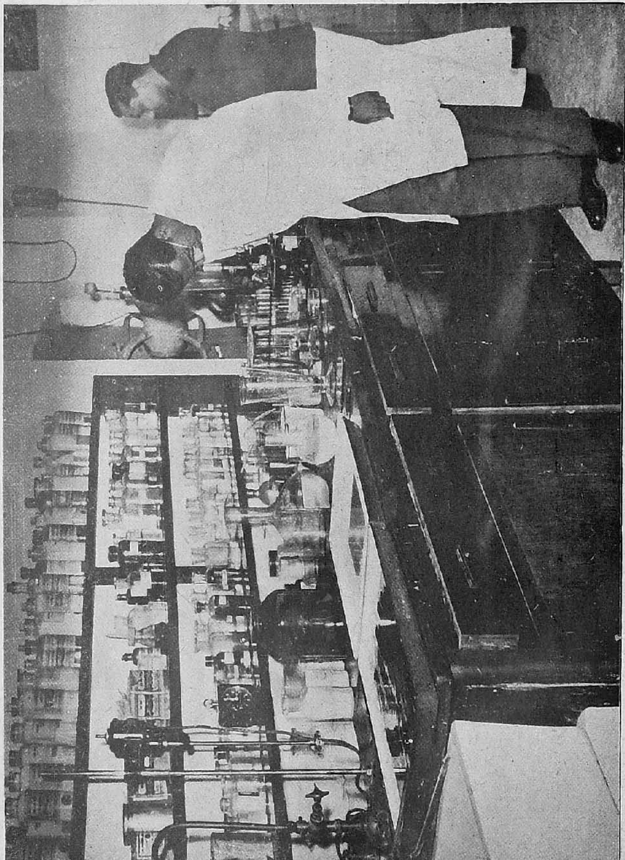
Nana Sahib's proclamation in Urdu regarding the famous "greased cartridges", 1857

National Archives of India
A Tibetan communication, 1793



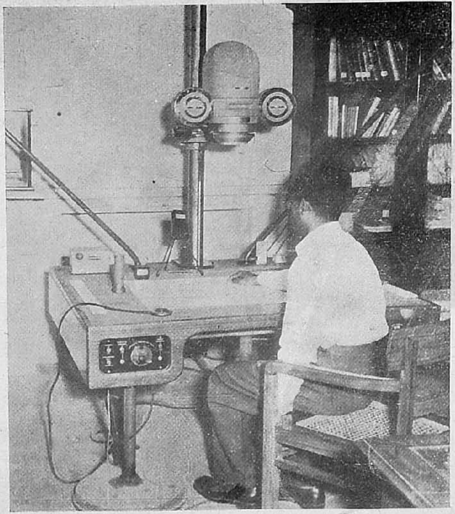
National Archives of India
Dusting bound volumes of records with vacuum cleaner

PLATE XXVIII



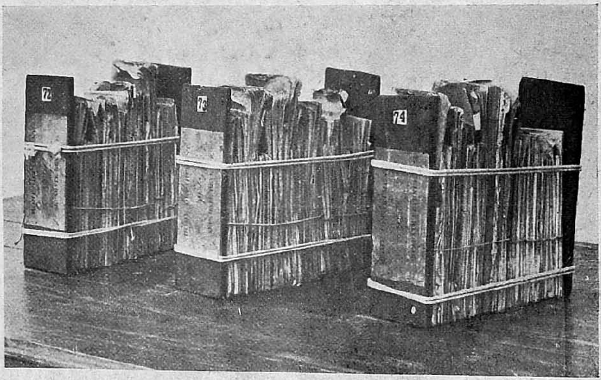
National Archives of India
A section of the chemical laboratory

National Archives of India
Roll of film being inserted in the microfilm reader



National Archives of India
The "Microstat" microfilm camera

PLATE XXXI



National Archives of India
Bundles of records before flat filing was adopted

up in 1787 to enquire into the causes of scarcity of silver in Bengal and clearly indicates that Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* published in 1776 was quite well known in the Writers' Building in 1787. Some Foreign Political papers of 1841 record Dr. Saughnessy's (Government Chemical Examiner and Professor at Calcutta Medical College) investigations into the paper bleaching industry of Bengal. Some documents of the same series dated 1844 preserve the anthropological and botanical data collected from the western Naga Hills of Assam. Land Revenue records of 1840-50 abound with information about experiments made on Indian soil with tea-seeds and cocoons imported from China or rearing of a new species by the crossing of different species of imported Italian silkworms.

Even the briefest note on the National Archives of India cannot be concluded without a reference to the five folio volumes of manuscripts known as the Malabar Commission's Report, 1792-94. The text of the main report was printed and published by the Madras Government in 1862 but the proceedings of the Commission, the minutes of evidence and documents submitted to the Commission remain an untapped source of unsurpassed value for the peculiar economic and social institutions and the racial history of Malabar. The report stands as a monument of the zeal and industry characteristic of the civilians of the pre-competition period. In the Home Public Series of March 1835 and in the Home Governor General Series of November 1839 we have the minutes of Lord William Bentinck, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Henry Thoby Prinsep and Lord Auckland laying down the educational policy which is supposed to have moulded the later history of India. The papers of the English banking firm of Hyderabad, Messrs. Palmer & Co., also deserve special notice here. There are

two volumes on the transactions of the Palmer Company in the Foreign Miscellaneous Series. These reveal the sad but familiar story of an unscrupulous British firm exploiting the difficulties of an Indian State, in league with the officials of the British Residency.

This brief account of the archival wealth of India is only illustrative but it goes far to show that the official manuscript records in the custody of the National Archives of India are not only of national importance but of international interest as well.

MEMORIES OF THE COMMISSION

R. B. RAMSBOTHAM

THE Director of Archives in India has kindly asked me to write a few lines about the early days of the Indian Historical Records Commission. I think that I was one of its earliest members, and the first meeting that I remember was in Calcutta, where Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali had collected an extremely interesting number of exhibits, revealing what a wealth of material was to be found in the archives of the various Indian provinces, and in the possession of private Indian gentlemen: if anyone reads the mere lists of exhibits in those early meetings, they will share my wonder and admiration at their survival. My second recollection is the happy and friendly nature of those gatherings. At a time when political feelings were running high no antagonisms spoilt our discussions; much mutual information was obtained; and very pleasant facilities were created for historical students from all parts of India to combine in the essential task of preserving and exploring these priceless relics. The provincial governments, generally speaking, were co-operative, though some whispers, that were more than rumours, raised horrifying doubts about the care and maintenance of documents that had lost their immediate administrative value. One could ramble on for a long time in reminiscences of the generous hospitality and cordial interest shown to the Commission and its members, but my chief memory is that each meeting provided a very inspiring and happy feeling that much valuable work was being done in an atmosphere entirely free from racial or communal prejudices.

The records of the meetings of other savants and students do not always show such harmony. I should like to conclude with a heart-felt tribute to the members of the various Records Departments in India: those gentlemen, working in very restricted conditions, and with no public praise or reward, have, between them, established an extremely capable body of archives-keepers; men with great technical ability in repairing and preserving archives, and filled with a genuine love of learning, and reverence for records: such men are invaluable, and India has always had many such on whom she could count. They themselves are fortunate to serve under the present Director of Archives: Dr Sen's ripe and judicious scholarship, his deep learning, and his entire devotion to the study of history, not as a partisan but as an impartial scholar, have made him the ideal holder of his responsible position, and he would be a valuable Director of Archives in any country. I hope that he will be spared to direct for many years to come the Indian National Archives.

In conclusion, I respectfully beg permission to congratulate the authorities of both of Pakistan and of India on their wise and scholarly decision not to separate the archives: by keeping them in tact, in spite of severe temptation otherwise, they have set an example to the whole civilised world.

R. C. Majumdar

THE Indian Historical Records Commission was constituted by the Government of India in 1919 for the purpose of 'advising it on the best means of preserving its records, listing and calendaring them, making them accessible to the public, and publishing catalogues and reproductions of the

more important papers in the State Archives.' My personal contact with it goes back to December 1929 when I attended the twelfth session held at Gwalior as a representative of the universities and a co-opted member. I also attended the next session at Patna. I was more closely connected with it, and regularly attended its sessions, since 1939. first as a co-opted and corresponding member, and then as an ordinary member from January 1942. During this period, *i.e.*, during the last ten years, I have noticed a phenomenal increase in the various activities of the Commission and it has achieved to a very large extent the object which has been defined above in the words of Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

The most important thing that struck me during these years is the widening of the Commission's basis by a closer co-operation with scholars all over India, and an enormous growth in the scope and nature of the activities of the Central Record Office in Delhi. As regards the first, it was mainly brought about by a change in the constitution and the institution of a Research and Publication Committee. The admirable work done by stalwarts like Sir Jadunath Sarkar has now been planned on a co-ordinated basis, and a five-year publication programme, adopted in January 1942, was finally approved in December of the same year in the nineteenth session at Trivandrum. The programme contemplates publication of no less than 39 volumes, namely, 21 volumes of Court Letters, 10 volumes of selections from English records, and 8 volumes of records in oriental languages. Of these, one volume has already been published and two are now in the press, while five volumes are ready for publication. The delay has been due to the difficulties of finding a suitable printing press owing to the exigencies of the war. Besides the above, the

Commission has published two volumes of indexes, one volume of Calendar of Persian correspondence (2 more volumes of this series being now in the press) and a manual of rules regulating access to the archives in India and Europe. In addition to these, one volume of index and one volume of Calendar of Persian correspondence is ready for the press. It is also gratifying to note that effect has been given to the scheme of publishing a journal mainly devoted to archival matters. These are creditable performances which have been made possible by the willing co-operation of a number of scholars. When the publication programme was first discussed in the 18th session at Mysore, I moved a resolution that the provincial governments, Indian States, universities and learned societies be requested to allow scholars in their employ facilities in the shape of leave and travelling allowances to enable them to participate in the scheme. The resolution was unanimously approved and many universities and learned institutions have given effect to it, with the result that the publication programme has achieved a unique success and has already aroused enthusiasm and interest in almost all the centres of learning in India. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that the Indian Historical Records Commission is now broad-based on the goodwill and sympathetic interest of a large number of scholars and learned institutions.

Along with the ambitious publication programme, increased facilities have been provided to research students. More and more records have been thrown open to *bona fide* research students and more liberal rules have been adopted regulating access to the archives and their use by research students. A resolution was adopted at Indore in December 1946.

recommending that the records of the Government of India and the provincial governments prior to 1901 be thrown open to *bona fide* research students and that the Governments concerned be moved to transfer all records, including Crown records up to 1901, to the custody of the record office under them. It was brought to the notice of the Commission that, although several provinces have good arrangements for their record office, many of the provinces and States are still lacking in them. A systematic effort has been made by the Commission to improve the state of things and to invest the Government of India with the responsibility of keeping a close watch and scrutiny, so that the records in the different parts of India may be satisfactorily preserved and prevented from damage or destruction, and increased facilities be given to all research students to utilise them.

A further step in the same direction has been the institution of Regional Survey Committees in those provinces where regular Survey Committees have not been set up by provincial governments. The Government of Bengal sadly neglected its duty in the matter of records and I brought the matter to the notice of the Commission. The Commission requested the Government of Bengal (and other provincial governments) to establish a regular Regional Survey Committee, but as they pleaded inability to do so, the Commission established an *ad hoc* Regional Survey Committee for Bengal and Assam and I was appointed the Convener. I got the support of a large number of scholars in Bengal interested in the subject, and very satisfactory work has been done during the last two or three years, although the Government of Bengal did not extend any financial support to this body or show any active sympathy towards it. The

Committee has unearthed several important documents and has made a thorough examination of the records of the Calcutta High Court.

Recently, the Government of India has increased the grant to this Committee, and we have adopted an ambitious programme for the next five years which, if carried into effect, will for the first time achieve in Bengal the objects with which the Indian Historical Records Commission was started. Although I have no personal knowledge of the work of the similar committees instituted in other provinces, I have reasons to believe, from my conversation with conveners of these committees, that they are also doing very useful work.

Originally, the scope of the Regional Survey Committee was confined to records in private custody, and on this plea, the Government of Bengal refused permission to us to examine the rich collection of records in the palace at Murshidabad. I accordingly moved the Indian Historical Records Commission and it recommended that the Regional Survey Committees be directed to explore and examine old historical records in private as well as official custody, and that the local Governments be requested to give them all facilities. It remains to be seen how far the present Government of Bengal acts up to these ideals. The Committee has requested the Government of Bengal to consult it on the question of partition of records between West Bengal and Eastern Pakistan. But, so far, the Committee has had no encouraging reply. I can only hope that although the Government of West Bengal has not yet been able to set up a regular Regional Survey Committee it should utilise the services of the *ad hoc* Committee that exists in deciding upon important questions like partition of records.

There has been considerable improvement in the arrangement of the general meetings and exhibition in connection with the annual session of the Commission. An important innovation has been the publication of a brochure containing a summary of the papers to be read at the general meeting. This enables the members to prepare beforehand for discussion in order to elucidate important points arising out of the papers.

But by far the most remarkable change during the period under review is to be seen in the Central Office at Delhi. From a small body it has grown into a huge establishment consisting of not less than 182 employees. Only about a month ago when I attended certain meetings of Committees appointed by the Commission, there was something like a social gathering arranged by the employees of the Record Office in Delhi. It was an agreeable surprise to find around us a distinguished gathering including some eminent scholars in history who are engaged in different types of work for preserving the records and bringing them to the notice of the public. New methods have been introduced for the preservation and restoration of documents and new machinery have been imported. The Commission recommended to the Government of India to provide necessary staff and building for housing and working the machinery, and though we have not received all that we wanted, still there has been a considerable improvement in this respect. I got some figures from the Central Office and I think the following language of statistics would best convey an idea of the recent activities of the Central Office.

Preservation Works since 1939.

Sheets of documents repaired	1,655,271
Volumes rebound	1,825

Bundles and volumes fumigated . .	60,250
Folded sheets flattened (since 1941) . . .	1,900,000

I may add also the following figures for 1947.

Requisitions supplied	23,902
Papers restored	13,302
No. of sheets repaired	125,548
No. of students whose enquiries have been answered	33
No. of research students	74
No. of trainees awarded Diploma since 1943 (besides certificate to 7 trainees)	18

Apart from the supervision of the huge establishment, the Director of National Archives of India, as the Head of the Department is now styled, has other important activities. One of these is the inspection of documents in States and provinces. It was recommended by the Commission in 1942 that the Keeper of the Records, as he was then called, should make a periodical inspection of the records of the Government of India and the Crown in provincial custody and circulate the reports of inspection to members of the Commission. In pursuance of this recommendation, the present Director of National Archives has visited several record offices and made valuable recommendations which are gradually being given effect to.

In various other ways also there has been increased co-operation between the Central Record Office in Delhi and the States and provinces. A notable example is furnished by the Calcutta High Court records. It was brought to the notice of the Commission that the High Court wanted to destroy many old records. A formal request was made to the Chief Justice not to destroy them but to transfer them to some record

office in Bengal or to any university in the province. The Chief Justice was not in favour of appointing a Committee of experts for scrutinising the old records condemned for destruction, but on the representation of some members of the Commission, he agreed that such records should be placed before an expert for scrutiny. At my suggestion, the Commission recommended the name of Dr N. K. Sinha for the purpose. This was accepted with very good result. Dr Sinha spent many months in scrutinising the records of the High Court and has collected many interesting documents throwing valuable light on the various aspects of the history of Bengal during the 18th and 19th centuries. The results of his researches will soon be published in the form of a handy volume which, I am sure, will considerably add to our knowledge of the history of this period.

The Central Office has also offered to help the provincial Governments in repairing the damaged records. The Commission has requested the Government of India to establish a Repair Room for records and extend its service to provincial governments, Indian States and the public. This would be very helpful to many provinces and States which are unable, from their own limited resources, to provide for such repair rooms equipped with up-to-date instruments. Further, the provincial and State governments have been requested to co-operate with the Indian Records Department in the preparation of a consolidated guide to the records in India.

In order to establish a still closer co-operation between the Central Record Office and those of the provinces and States, I proposed two years ago that all pre-Mutiny records in the custody of local governments be placed in charge of the

Indian Records Department and be made a central subject for the purposes of administration. I did not mean by this resolution that these records should be bodily transferred from the provinces and States to Delhi. What I intended was that there should be uniformity in the method of preservation and classification of these records and their accessibility to research students. There are certain provinces and States which maintain good record offices, but there are others which for various reasons are unable to do so. My proposal would have enabled the latter, with the help of the Central Government, to maintain an up-to-date record office with all facilities to research students. It was considered at length by various committees and, in substance, has now been approved by the Commission. Perhaps some negotiations between the Central Government and the provincial and the State governments would be necessary for this purpose, but, if my proposal be ultimately given effect to, it will establish a very intimate and cordial relation between all the record offices in India and ensure a uniform policy of administration.

In pursuance of the same policy, it has further been recommended in the Jaipur session, held in February 1948, that the administrative control of pre-1902 records, formerly in the custody of Residents to Indian States, should be transferred to the Central Record Office.

The Central Office has also provided ample facilities to research students. In addition to better arrangements for reading, the shelf-arrangements and the system of indexing have been so much improved that anyone can get not only a full reference, but actual access to the documents he wants within a very short time. I had personal experience of these facilities when I went to Delhi to consult some records about

Maharaj Raj Ballav going back to the middle of the 18th century. Due to the excellent classification and method of indexing, the department placed at my disposal all the available records at a very short notice, so that I could finish my work during a stay of two to three days. The value of such facilities can only be appreciated by those who work with records, and every research student in modern history must consider it a great boon that the Central Record Office has made such an excellent arrangement in regard to the huge quantity of records at its disposal.

The Commission has considered many new plans and programmes for cultural improvement and also made several recommendations for the advancement of historical study particularly in the British period. As early as 1939 a resolution was moved requesting the Government of India to adopt a ten-year plan for securing typescript or micro-film copies of records relating to India from abroad. Although this course was not found practicable during the war, it is now high time to give effect to it. A regular search and scrutiny in the archives of Holland, Portugal, France and other countries which came into close contact with India in the 17th and 18th centuries, would undoubtedly reveal many interesting documents.

The Commission also recommended that all the universities in India be placed on the free distribution list of the Central, provincial and State governments. This resolution which was moved by me as early as 1942, if given effect to, would go a great way in bringing within easy reach of every scholar all the important documents published in any part of India.

In the 22nd session of the Commission held at Peshawar in October 1945, an elaborate programme for the cultural

reconstruction of India drawn up by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, was placed before the Commission. On behalf of the Society, I explained the details of the various suggestions, and after a healthy and helpful discussion, the Commission supported the proposals. One of these, *viz.*, the establishment of an All-India Cultural Institute in order to promote various arts including music and dancing, was approved last year by the All-India Educational Conference convened by the Hon'ble Minister of Education.

The Commission pressed upon the Government of India the necessity of making suitable legislation for preventing unwarranted destruction of historical documents and manuscripts and their export from India. The Commission also recommended the establishment of cultural relations with foreign countries.

The Commission further proposed that in keeping with the new spirit of the times, the name of the Imperial Record Department should be changed to 'National Archives of India' and this has been done.

Special reference must be made to the great service that the Director of National Archives has rendered to the country by urging upon the Government of India the observance of the international principles in the matter of partitioning the records between Indian Dominion and Pakistan. As a result of his urgent representations, it has been decided that the records which are at present in the Indian Dominion should not be removed, but micro-film copies may be supplied on demand to the Government of Pakistan. This line of action, which follows the approved international policy in this respect, has been fully endorsed by the Commission, and it is confidently

expected that it will also be observed if and when any question arises about the partition of provincial or State records.

In conclusion, I must refer to the very many social functions which have now come to be regarded as an essential feature of the annual sessions of the Commission. Members who have attended these meetings must remember with vivid pleasure the many tours to places of historical interest and the varied entertainments in the form of tea, dinners, dances and musical programme, etc., which were arranged in their honour by the local organisers. Another interesting feature is the number of popular lectures delivered by the visiting members of the Commission which have always evoked great interest among the local intelligentsia. There is no doubt that by these means a very intimate and cultural contact has been established between the members of the Commission and the local people. Above all, these functions have served the great purpose of popularising the main idea of the Commission, namely, that an effort should be made by all to recover from private custody the valuable records of the past which still lie hidden from the public eye. The great interest and enthusiasm which the annual session evokes in the locality will, I am sure, induce the gentry of the neighbouring region to appreciate the motive of the Commission and the nature of their mission, and to voluntarily offer the records which may be in their possession. In general, there has been a distinct improvement among the lay public in their appreciation of the value of historical records and the necessity of making them accessible to scholars; and the more this idea is spread, the better for the future historical studies of India.

Even the brief summary of the various activities of the Commission which I have sketched above will, I hope, be

sufficient to convince anybody of the eminent service rendered by the Commission within the short span of its existence. I only hope that the Commission will continue its useful career and render equal service to the cause of history in the coming years.

G. S. Bajpai

FOR eight years, *i.e.*, from 1932 to 1940, I was Chairman of the Indian Historical Records Commission. During this relatively long period, I could manage to attend only one annual session. This was due not to any lack of interest in the Commission's activities but to pressure of work at headquarters. The one session over which I presided in Poona I greatly enjoyed. It gave me an opportunity of meeting some of our distinguished historians, including their doyen, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, and to get an idea of the extracurricular interest of our historical scholars. One must not forget that, in this as in other branches of knowledge, the bulk of the study and research is done by teachers in our universities.

The value of official records as a source of history has long been appreciated in Europe. Indeed, Acton, a great historian despite the smallness of his written output, considered no work on modern history to be authentic unless it was based on a thorough and critical study of official records. Sorel's work on the French Revolution was based almost exclusively on the study of the relevant material in the National Archives of France. India, especially during the last 150 years, managed to accumulate a vast treasure of written material to serve as a source, perhaps the primary

source, for the writing of this interesting period of her history. The search for this material and its arrangement, subjectwise and chronologically, has been no easy task. Government, of course, had to take the initiative in starting it; its successful pursuit, however, depend upon the interest and collaboration of scholars outside the service of Government. The purpose and the endeavour of the Indian Historical Records Commission were to sift, preserve and arrange India's official records and to enlist the support of all historic scholars.

How ample the success of the activities of the Commission has been in recent years is a question which I cannot answer from direct personal participation. Both time and opportunity have been lacking. What I have heard from friends is that progress has been remarkable. Much of this, if I may say so, is due to the enthusiasm, the scholarship and mastery of the archivist's technique of Dr. Sen. It was my privilege to select him for his present post. It is one of the few decisions of my official life which I shall remember with pride. May the Commission, in particular, and historical scholarship in India, in general, long enjoy his inspiration and guidance.

APPENDIX A

Government of India, Department of Education, Resolution No. 77 (General), dated 21st March 1919.

The Government of India have been considering for some time past the question of making the official records in India more accessible than at present to students of history and of removing, so far as possible, any existing obstacles to research. In framing suggestions to this end, they have been assisted by the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Public Records of England and Wales. Certain questions arising from the application of those recommendations to Indian records were laid before local Governments. After considering their replies and consulting expert advice, the Government of India have decided to introduce the following changes in their own Record Office and they recommend a like procedure in the offices of the local Governments.

Records to be made more accessible.

2. The records of India are kept partly in the Records Office of the Government of India, and partly in the provincial Records offices. The system hitherto followed in their treatment is evolved from the practice followed in the English Record Office and consists in the preparation of :—

Present position.

(i) a press-list giving a complete list of documents, with some indication of their dates and contents;

(ii) a calendar giving a precis of nearly every document of importance or a reference to some publication where it may be found.

Were full effect given to this system, it would greatly facilitate the work of students and serve to remove some of the difficulties which now militate against research. But the progress made has not been satisfactory and the system has been characterised as defective by the Commission in England. Press-lists are regarded as too meagre. Calendaring is admitted to be a process too slow, too elaborate and too costly for application to modern State papers. Such criticisms of the method pursued in England have still greater weight in India, where widely scattered collections and paucity of workers present additional difficulties.

3. In supersession of this system, the Government of India have now decided that the best method of rendering the records accessible to the public will be as follows :—

Method of treatment in the future

(i) The preparation of a list of the volumes or bundles contained in the Records offices accompanied by a descriptive handbook to their general contents.

(ii) The calendaring of certain documents only.

(iii) The reprinting in full of certain specified classes of documents.

By dealing with the records on these principles, it will be possible to discontinue the preparation of press-lists except so far as may be necessary to finish a volume which is in hand or to complete a definite series which is capable of completion within three or four years. In the same way, when the preparation of calendars now actually in hand has been completed, no fresh calendars should be prepared except in accordance with the system now suggested.

Some amplifications of the three new methods now proposed is found in the paragraphs below.

Catalogues and handbook.

4. It is an essential preliminary that in each Records office there should be a printed list or catalogue of the volumes and bundles which it contains.

Such lists require to be supplemented by a brief *catalogue raisonne* or handbook on lines similar either to the Madras handbook published by the Curator of the Madras Records or to the more detailed catalogue of Orme manuscripts prepared by Mr S. C. Hill.

A student of history will ordinarily with the help of the printed catalogues and handbooks be placed in a position to know whether a particular office is likely to contain papers of the kind required by him. The offices already contain in a greater or less degree a series of manuscript indices to the proceedings, which have been compiled contemporaneously with the proceedings themselves, and these indices though often defective are utilized for tracing documents for administrative purposes. If a moderate degree of attention is devoted to the maintenance and where necessary to the completion of these indices, it is believed that when a student has ascertained the existence in the office of any class of documents of which he is in search, he will be able with the help of these indices to be placed by the records staff in possession of such documents as he may desire. By these means the Government of India hope to attain the object for which press-lists have hitherto been compiled without incurring the loss of time and money which the continued preparation of such pres-lists would entail.

Calendars.

5. For the benefit of the general public and of students who are unable to visit the Records offices or to read the documents in vernacular, the preparation of calendars may be desirable. But the matter to be dealt with in these calendars would be so limited as to enable the calendaring

to be completed within a reasonable limit of years and would be defined under a pre-arranged system so as not to be subject to alteration by individuals. The precise fields to be selected for this purpose would be determined by the Indian Historical Records Commission, described in paragraph 8 below; but as at present advised, the Government of India would confine the preparation of calendars to the despatches passing between the Indian and the Home Government, certain series of vernacular records and a few selected series of English records.

Reprints.

6. The Government of India in the third place hope that the reprinting in full of certain records or selections of records will be undertaken (*a*) by the Government itself, (*b*) by private societies, and individuals with financial assistance from Government, and (*c*) by such societies or individuals without such help.

(*a*) As regards work to be done by Government it is worth mentioning that a certain amount has already been accomplished, though on no uniform plan. In Bombay, Madras and the Central Provinces, for instance, a large number of fasciculi have been issued containing interesting reprints of individual reports or special series of correspondence and a valuable collection of papers has been reprinted by the Punjab Government in ten volumes. Any series at present under reprint might suitably be concluded, but for the future the Government of India desire that except in the case of records showing signs of decay or likely to perish, such reprinting should be confined to records of a date previous to 1702.

(*b*) The Government of India are of opinion that an arrangement under which Government should subsidize reprinting by private societies or individuals may suitably be introduced to meet the case of special classes of records, the determination of the records to be so treated resting with the Government or with the Commission proposed in paragraph 8 below. The publications thus subsidized should, however, be confined to copies of unedited records or translations of vernacular records which have not before been published in English.

(*c*) The Government of India consider that publication of reprints without financial help from Government, if carried out by competent persons, should be encouraged in every possible way, and all necessary facilities should be given by Government officers to the students who undertake it.

7. In addition to the steps explained above, which the Government of India think can be taken to bring the contents of the records to

the notice of those who wish to use them for research, arrangements may suitably be made by the various Records offices to grant proper facilities to those who desire personally to consult the documents. For this purpose a series of rules is desirable for each Records office, to govern the use of records by students. Such rules have already been introduced in the Bengal Record Room and where similar rules are framed for other Records offices efforts are required to keep them before the public whom they affect by communicating them to the Professors of History in Colleges and Universities and in other ways. The Government of India recognise that considerable advantage would attend the grant of free access, with suitable precautions, to the earlier records and they would be prepared to have the matter considered under the advice of the Indian Historical Records Commission. The Government of India would at the same time like arrangements to be made for a fuller interchange than at present of the publications of the various Records offices and a more extensive sale of these to the public.

Accessibility of records to students.

8. The Government of India feel that in these questions they should have at their disposal a permanent body of expert advisers whose opinion would carry weight with the Records officers and the public. With such a body at hand for advice, they are convinced that the methods adopted would meet the real wants of genuine historical students. They have accordingly decided to constitute an "Indian Historical Records Commission" consisting of:—

Indian Historical Records Commission.

(1) The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, *ex-officio* President.
(2) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary.
(3) The Curator, Madras Record Office, *ex-officio* member.
(4) The Keeper of Records, Bengal, *ex-officio* member.
(5) Professor Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., member.
(6) The Ven'ble Archdeacon W. K. Firminger, M.A., B.D., B.Litt., member.
(7) Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, M.A., member.
(8) Mr B. K. Thakore, B.A., member.

The *ex-officio* members will be permanent, but the rest of the members will hold office for a period of three or five years. The headquarters of the Commission will be at Delhi and it would ordinarily meet twice a year—the routine work between meetings being carried on by the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, Calcutta, as permanent Secretary to the Commission. The duties of the Commission would be of a purely consultative character; it would

make enquiries and recommendations regarding (i) the treatment of archives for the purposes of historical study in all provinces of India and in such Indian States as might seek their advice; (ii) the scale and plan on which the cataloguing, calendaring and reprinting of each class of documents should be undertaken; (iii) the sums required for encouraging research and publication in respect of unpublished documents; (iv) the extent to which and the manner in which documents should be open to inspection by the public; and (v) the training of Indian students from the Universities in methods of historical research and the selection of competent editors and assistants for the publication of documents. The Government of India have also arranged to place at the disposal of their Department of Education, when the financial conditions improve, a grant of money, the distribution of which would be effected annually after consultation with the Commission.

Annual reports of record offices.

9. In order to enable the Commission to follow the progress of the work in the various Records offices, the Government of India desire that each officer in charge of a Records office containing archives of historical interest should submit annually to the local Government concerned a very brief report containing information as to the work done in respect of cataloguing, calendaring, reprinting, indexing and weeding of all the older records and the use made by public of the facilities afforded by the Records offices. If the officer in charge exercises supervision over district records also, a brief note on the results of that supervision may be added to his report.

Concentration of older records.

10. Among the difficulties attendant on historical research in India, the most prominent is the fact that documents are scattered, with the result that the student even of a single subject may have to prosecute his investigations at widely distant places. In Madras steps have already been taken to remedy this defect; district records previous to 1820 and, it is understood, certain other documents have been concentrated in the provincial Record Room. It is possible that other local Governments will follow their lead. The cataloguing and inspection of district records is in any case desirable. The larger question of removing the older records to a central office for all India has been considered from time to time, but has, not unnaturally, encountered opposition. The Government of India accordingly make no further suggestion on this subject at present, though the matter is one which the Indian Historical Records Commission will doubtless consider.

Order.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin

for information and guidance. Ordered also that a copy be forwarded to the Home Department, Finance Department, Public Works Department, Department of Revenue and Agriculture, Legislative Department, Foreign and Political Department, Department of Commerce and Industry, Railway Department (Railway Board), Army Department, Indian Munitions Board, Financial Adviser, Military Finance, and the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India for information and guidance and that the Resolution be published in the supplement in the *Gazette of India*.

Madras, Bombay, Bengal, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, Punjab, Burma, Central Provinces, Assam, North-West Frontier Province, Coorg and Delhi.

APPENDIX B

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

RESOLUTION.

(EDUCATION.)

Simla, the 16th September 1941.

No. F. 92-9/40-E.—In their Department of Education Resolution No. 77, dated the 21st March 1919, the Government of India announced their decision to adopt certain measures with a view to making the official records in India more accessible than before to students of history and to removing any existing obstacles to research. One of these measures was the constitution of the Indian Historical Records Commission which was intended to serve as a permanent body of experts whose opinion would carry weight both with the Government and the public. It was laid down that the duties of the Commission would be of a purely consultative character; it would make enquiries and recommendations regarding (i) the treatment of archives for the purposes of historical study in all provinces of India and in such Indian States as might seek their advice, (ii) the scale and plan on which the cataloguing, calendaring and reprinting of each class of documents should be undertaken, (iii) the sums required for encouraging research and publication in respect of unpublished documents, (iv) the extent to which and the manner in which documents should be open to inspection by the public, and (v) the training of Indian students from the Universities in methods of historical research and the selection of competent editors and assistants for the publication of documents.

2. At present the Commission consists of seven experts and the following four *ex-officio* members :—

(1) The Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands *ex-officio* President.

(2) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary.

(3) The Curator, Madras Record Office.

(4) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of Bengal.

Besides these, there is another category of members designated as "Corresponding Members." This new class of membership was created in pursuance of a recommendation made by the Commission at its sixth meeting in 1924 and it now includes over 50 persons. The main function of these members is to conduct research among records

and to bring to the notice of the Commission such historical documents in private custody as they may discover. It has also been the usual practice to invite contributors of papers to the public meetings of the Commission and persons taking interest in the Commission's activities to attend the annual sessions as co-opted members.

3. During the two decades which have elapsed since its constitution, the Commission has held seventeen meetings at various important centres in India, including two in Indian States, and has done much to foster an interest in historical records and to stimulate research in Indian history. A great deal, however, yet remains to be done. For example, many provinces are still without any organized Record offices. Some Provincial Record offices are not yet in a position to provide research scholars with the handbooks and calendars contemplated by the Commission. No regional surveys have been organized with a view to rescuing valuable manuscript records in private custody from inevitable ravages of insect pests, age and other destructive agents. No scheme has so far been evolved for training university students in scientific methods of historical research. The experience gained up to the present clearly indicates that substantial progress can only be achieved by greater and more active co-operation between the Commission on the one hand and the Provincial Governments, Indian States, Universities and learned institutions on the other.

4. In order to promote such co-operation, the Government of India are now pleased to sanction, after consultation with Provincial Governments, Indian States, Indian Universities and learned societies interested in the matter, a scheme for the reorganization of the Indian Historical Records Commission on a broader basis. They have decided that the Commission shall in future consist of members of the following three categories :—

(A) *Ordinary Members*—

(i) The Honourable Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands, Government of India, *ex-officio* President.

(ii) Not more than five experts appointed by the Government of India on account of their specialised knowledge of the treatment of archives or their contribution to Indo-British History.

(iii) One nominee each of such Provincial Governments and Indian States as may have organized record rooms.

(iv) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary.

The existing *ex-officio* and other Ordinary Members of the Commission shall be regarded as having ceased to be such, with effect from the date of this Resolution, with the exception of the Keeper of the Records

of the Government of India who continues to be *ex-officio* Secretary under (iv) above. The new *ex-officio* President shall also be regarded as having assumed charge of his duties in that capacity with effect from the same date.

(B) *Corresponding Members.*—The selection of members in this category will be confined to persons directly interested in records, only published work of sufficient merit being accepted as satisfactory evidence of such interest. It is intended that their number should eventually be limited to 40, excluding persons residing in the United Kingdom, but the existing Corresponding Members shall continue to be so until the expiration of the term for which they have already been appointed. Corresponding Members will have the option of attending the public meetings of the Commission and may, by special invitation, participate in the deliberations of the members' meetings. They will, however, be expected to bear their own expenses.

(C) *Associate Members.*—All members of the Research and Publication Committee mentioned hereafter will have the status of Associate Members. They will be entitled to attend the members' meetings and will enjoy the rights of the Ordinary Members.

5. The Commission will have the following two adjuncts:—

(i) *A Research and Publication Committee.*—The duties of this Committee will briefly be to further the research activities of the Record offices of the Central and Provincial Governments and Indian States and to undertake or to promote regional surveys for bringing manuscript records in private custody to public notice as well as to suggest ways and means for their preservation and publication whenever necessary. The composition of this Committee will be as follows:—

(*a*) The Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, *ex-officio* Chairman.

(*b*) The experts appointed as Ordinary Members of the Commission under paragraph 4 (A) (ii) above.

(*c*) One nominee each of such Provincial Governments and Indian States as may co-operate with the Commission in the publication of Provincial and State Records.

(*d*) One nominee each of such learned societies and universities as may co-operate with the Commission in its publication programme and in conducting regional surveys and explorations of archives in India.

(*e*) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India as *ex-officio* Secretary.

The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India will also remain the general editor of the Indian Records Series but, whenever necessary, the services of other experts will be utilized to assist in

the publication of any particular volume or volumes. The Research and Publication Committee will, especially in the matter of regional surveys, need regional co-operation, whether purely official or official and non-official combined. The Government of India trust that Governments of the Provinces and Indian States will set up regional organisations constituted according to the special needs of the territories under their control, to co-operate with the central organization on which they will be fully represented.

(2) *A Local Records Sub-Committee.*—The main function of this Sub-Committee will be to advise the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India on such matters connected with the work of the Imperial Record Department as may be referred to it. It will consist of the following:—

(*a*) The Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, *ex-officio* Chairman.

(*b*) A nominee of the Secretary to His Excellency the Crown Representative.

(*c*) A Corresponding or an Associate Member of the Commission ordinarily residing in Delhi Province selected by the Government of India.

(*d*) The Keeper of the Records of the Government of India, *ex-officio* Secretary.

6. The Government of India desire that the nominees of the Provincial Governments and the Indian States to be appointed as Ordinary Members of the Commission should be their official spokesmen competent to represent their point of view on all questions concerning the Provincal Governments or the Indian States, as the case may be, in their administrative and financial aspects, and that the nominees of these authorities and of learned societies and Universities to be appointed as members of the Research and Publication Committee should be men of academic distinction with a considerable amount of original research work on the British period of Indian history to their credit. This does not exclude the possibility of the same person being selected to represent a Provincial Government or an Indian State, as the case may be, on both the Commission and the Committee, though a Provincial Government or an Indian State will be at liberty to nominate different persons to serve on the two bodies.

7. The Ordinary Members of the Commission and members of the Research and Publication Committee (other than *ex-officio* Ordinary Members of the Commission and *ex-officio* members of the Research and Publication Committee), as also all Corresponding Members of the Commission, will be appointed for a term of five years, but they will be eligible for re-appointment.

8. The travelling allowance of the *ex-officio* President and Secretary of the Commission, the *ex-officio* Chairman and Secretary of the Research and Publication Committee and the experts referred to in paragraphs 4 (A) (ii) and 5 (1) (*b*) will be a charge on Central revenues. The *ex-officio* President and Secretary of the Commission, the *ex-officio* Chairman and Secretary of the Research and Publication Committee and any officials appointed as experts under paragraphs 4 (A) (ii) and 5 (1) (*b*) will draw travelling allowance as on tour for attending meetings of the Commission or the Committee and the expenditure will be debited to the same head as their pay. Non-officials appointed as experts will draw travelling allowance at first class rates and their daily allowance will ordinarily be Rs. 5 per diem but in special cases, such as those of persons who are employees of non-official bodies like Universities, *e.g.*, Vice-Chancellors, and who are in receipt of a pay exceeding Rs. 1,000 per mensem, the amount of daily allowance will be regulated in accordance with Supplementary Rule 51. The expenditure will be met from the budget grant of the Imperial Record Department. The Provincial Governments, the Indian States, the Universities and learned societies concerned will be required to bear the travelling allowances of their nominees serving as Ordinary Members of the Commission or as members of the Research and Publication Committee.

9. Facilities will be provided at the Imperial Record Department, New Delhi, for training a limited number of students in scientific methods of (i) the storage, preservation and repair of records and (ii) historical research. The Provincial Governments, the Indian States, Universities and learned societies will, the Government of India hope, avail themselves of these facilities and send suitable persons for such training either at their own expense or at the expense of the persons concerned. When necessary, they may also apply to the Government of India for the services of the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India to advise them on matters connected with records, but they will have to bear the travelling allowances of the Keeper of the Records and any staff accompanying him, if he has to visit any place for this purpose.

10. The Government of India desire that the re-organization of the Indian Historical Records Commission on the lines now laid down should be completed in time for the next session of the Commission which is to be held at Mysore not later than January 1942 and that the Commission should, as soon as possible, draw up for submission to the Government of India a five-year programme of work together with a statement showing the expenditure likely to be incurred in each of the five years and the manner in which it may be allocated between

the various authorities concerned, *e.g.*, the Central and Provincial Governments and Indian States. Neither the Government of India, nor the Provincial Governments, Indian States, Universities and learned societies are to be regarded as having been, in any way, committed in advance to the acceptance, in whole or in part, of the five-year programme or of any other measures that may be recommended by the Commission or by the Research and Publication Committee. They will also retain full freedom to modify or reject any views that may be expressed from time to time by their respective nominees on the Commission or the Committee. The Government of India, however, feel confident that the recommendations of the Commission and the Committee will undoubtedly carry weight with and receive full consideration from all the parties concerned and that intelligent co-operation and goodwill will result in a general improvement of the existing arrangements for the discovery, preservation, publication and exploitation for research of the valuable records all over the country.

Order.—Ordered that this Resolution be communicated to all Provincial Governments and Local Administrations, the several Departments of the Government of India (including the Financial Adviser, Military Finance, the Central Board of Revenue, the Defence Co-ordination Department and the Department of Supply), the Political Department, the Secretary, Governor General (Personal), the Secretary, Governor General (Public), the Secretary, Governor General (Reforms), the Military Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Keeper of the Records of the Government of India.

Ordered also that this Resolution be published in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India*.

JOHN SARGENT,
Joint Secy. to the Govt. of India.

APPENDIX C

Sessions of the Indian Historical Records Commission

1st Session—1919—(19-20 June)—Simla.
2nd Session—1920—(8-9 January)—Lahore.
3rd Session—1921—(4-5 January)—Bombay.
4th Session—1922—(6 January)—Delhi.
5th Session—1923—(12 January)—Calcutta.
6th Session—1924—(10-11 January)—Madras.
7th Session—1925—(12-13 January)—Poona.
8th Session—1925—(23-24 November)—Lahore.
9th Session—1926—(16-17 December)—Lucknow.
10th Session—1927—(7-8 December)—Rangoon.
11th Session—1928—(5-6 December)—Nagpur.
12th Session—1929—(21-22 December)—Gwalior.
13th Session—1930—(22-23 December)—Patna.
14th Session—1937—(13-15 December)—Lahore.
15th Session—1938—(16-17 December)—Poona.
16th Session—1939—(13-14 December)—Calcutta.
17th Session—1940—(21-22 December)—Baroda.
18th Session—1942—(21-23 January)—Mysore.
19th Session—1942—(28-29 December)—Trivandrum.
20th Session—1943—(22-23 December)—Aligarh.
21st Session—1944—(7-8 December)—Udaipur.
22nd Session—1945—(29-30 October)—Peshawar.
23rd Session—1946—(20-22 December)—Indore.
24th Session—1948—(21-23 February)—Jaipur.

APPENDIX D

Ex-officio Presidents of the Indian Historical Records Commission

1. Sir E. D. Maclagan—up to 1919.
2. H. Sharp—1919-22.
3. M. S. D. Butler—1923-24.
4. J. W. Bhore—1925.
5. R. B. Ewbank—1925 November (offg.).
6. H. G. Dennehey—1926 (offg.).
7. J. W. Bhore—1927.
8. G. S. Bajpai—1928.
9. Sir Frank Noyce—1929-30.
10. Sir G. S. Bajpai—1937-41.
11. N. R. Sarkar—1942.
12. Sir Jogendra Singh—1942-45.
13. Sir S. A. Khan—1946 (September to October).
14. C. Rajagopalachari—1946.
15. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—1947.

Ex-officio Secretaries of the Indian Historical Records Commission

1. A. F. Scholfield—up to 21st June 1919.
2. R. H. Blaker—June 1919-20.
3. J. M. Mitra—1921-22.
4. A. F. M. Abdul Ali—1923-37.
5. C. P. Singer—1938 (offg.).
6. S. N. Sen—1939.

APPENDIX E

List of Ordinary Members

1919-22 . .	Archdeacon W. K. Firminger, M.A., B.D., B.Litt., D.D.
1919-40 . .	Sir Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., D.Litt., I.E.S.
1919-26 . .	Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, M.A.
1919-25 . .	Professor B. K. Thakore, B.A.
1923-25 . .	Hon'ble Mr. (afterwards Sir) H. E. A. Cotton, C.I.E.
1923-26 . .	Mr J. J. Cotton, I.C.S.
1925-28 . .	Mr R. B. Ramsbotham, M.A., B.Litt., M.B.E., I.E.S.
1926-30 . .	Mr H. G. Rawlinson, M.A., I.E.S.
1927-29 . .	Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai, B.A.
1929-40 . .	Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, M.A., D.Litt., I.E.S.
1930-40 . .	Rao Bahadur Dr S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, M.A., Ph.D.
1937-40 .	Reverend Father H. Heras, M.A., S.J.
1938-46 . .	Lt.-Col. H. Bullock, Deputy Judge-Advocate General.
1939-40 . .	Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdul Ali, M.A.
1942 . .	Mahamahopadhyaya Professor D. V. Potdar, B.A.
1942 . .	Professor Muhammad Habib, B.A. (Oxon.).
1942 . .	Dewan Bahadur Professor C. S. Srinivasachari, M.A.
1942 . .	Dr R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.
1948 . .	Dr Tara Chand, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.).

APPENDIX F

Five-year Publication Scheme

INDIAN RECORD SERIES

SCHEME I.

Fort William—India House Correspondence.

Nature of Records.	Volumes.	Editors and/or Publishers.	Remarks.
Home Department, 1748-92.	I (1748-56) . .	Dr K. K. Datta .	Volume ready for the Press.
	II (1757-59) .	Dr H. N. Sinha .	Volume ready for the Press.
	III (1760-63) .	Prof. D. N. Banerji .	Only a part of his work received.
	IV (1764-66) .	Diwan Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachari.	Volume ready for the Press.
	V (1767-69)] .	Dr N. K. Sinha .	Volume in the Press.
	VI (1770-72) .	Dr Bisheshwar Prasad	Volume ready for the Press.
	VII (1773-76) .	Mr R. P. Patwardhan	....
	VIII (1777-81) .	Prof. Muhd. Habib .	....
	IX (1782-85) .	Dr B. A. Saletore .	....
	X (1786-88) .	Dr T. G. P. Spear .	....
	XI (1789-92) .	Dr I. B. Banerjee .	....
Home Sep. Rev.	XII (1793-95) .	Dr S. N. Das Gupta .	....
Home Sep. (Legislative).	XIII (1796-1800) .	Dr P. C. Gupta .	....
Secret, Select Committee.	XIV (1752-81) .	Prof. J. C. Taluqdar .	....

APPENDIX F—*contd.*

SCHEME I—*contd.*

Fort William—India House Correspondence—contd.

Nature of Records.	Volumes.	Editors and/or Publishers.	Remarks.
Foreign, Secret. .	XV (1782-86) .	Dr A. G. Pawar .	....
Secret & Sep. .	XVI (1787-91) .	Khan Sahib S. H. Askari	....
Sec., For., & Pol.	XVII (1792-95) .	Mr Y. J. Taraporewala	Only the introduction received.
Ditto . .	XVIII (1796-1800)	Rev. Father H. Heras	....
Military Department, 1787-1800.	XIX (1787-92) .	Brig. H. Bullock .	....
	XX (1792-95) .	Dr A. C. Banerjee .	....
	XXI (1796-1800) .	Prof. S. R. Kohli .	....

SCHEME II.

Selection from English Records.

Nature of Records.	Volumes.	Editors and/or Publishers.	Remarks.
Browne's Correspondence	I	Director of Archives, Government of India.	Efforts to get the missing pages from the India Office continuing.
Sir John Shore's Minutes	I	Ditto . .	Progressing.
Ditto. . .	II	Ditto . .	Ditto
Ditto. . .	III	Ditto . .	Ditto
Thevenot and Careri's Travels.	I	Ditto . .	In the Press.

APPENDIX F—*concld.*

SCHEME III (A).

Records in Oriental Languages.

Nature of Records.	Volumes.	Editors and/or Publishers.	Remarks.
Bengali (1779-1820) .	I	Calcutta University .	A volume entitled Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan has already been published.
Marathi (1779-1803) .	I	Bharata Itihasa Samsodhaka Mandala, Poona.	....
Persian Akhbars (1773-1803).	I	Delhi University . .	....
Hindi (1793-1820) . .	I	Allahabad University .	Transcripts handed over.
Ditto . . .	II	Kotah Darbar . .	Editing in progress.
Sanskrit (1778-1857) .	I	Ganganath Jha Research Institute, Allahabad.	In the Press.
Tamil (1824-64) . .	I	Annamalai University .	....
Kannada (1791-1865) .	I	Dr B. A. Saletore . .	Dr Saletore proposes to move the Bombay University to publish the volume.

SCHEME III (B).

Selections from English Records.

Nature of Records.	Volumes.	Editors and/or Publishers.	Remarks.
Selections from Orme Manuscripts.	I	Annamalai University .	Work progressing.
Punjab Akhbar (1839-41) .	I	Sikh History Society, Amritsar.	Work progressing.
News Letters (1839-42) .	..	....	Negotiation with the Punjab University was proceeding when the partition intervened.
Elphinstone Correspondence, *Nagpur period* (1804-08)	I	Nagpur University .	Work progressing.
Ochterlony Papers on Delhi and Central India (1818-25).	..	....	A list of the documents to be included in the volume has been prepared by Dr B. Prasad.

APPENDIX G

Post-War Reorganisation of Archives Offices in India

Report of the Research and Publication Committee of the Indian Historical Records Commission, reprinted from the Proceedings of the Commission, Udaipur Session, held in December 1944.

Before 1891 the Government of India had no organised record office of its own, each department took what care of its records it could and their importance as raw materials of history was not adequately recognised. When the Imperial Record Department came into existence only pre-Mutiny records were transferred to its custody, but the current or post-Mutiny records remained as before with the departments of origin. Though nobody could claim access to these papers as a matter of right, their historical value was fully appreciated and officers in charge of the records continued to be recruited from the Indian Education Service until 1912. They were expected to explore these untapped sources and bring the results of their researches to light for the benefit of the ordinary students. Professor (afterwards Sir) G. W. Forrest, the first Officer-in-Charge, published four volumes of selections from the records in his custody and he had previous to his appointment edited similar selections both from Bombay and Central records. Three of his successors, Mr S. C. Hill, Mr N. L. Hallward and Dr C. R. Wilson brought out valuable monographs based on the unpublished records of the Government of India. The record office, however, still remained inaccessible to the non-official research students. Denied access to their sources at home they went in steadily increasing numbers to England and the Continent where the rules were more liberal and the restrictions less stringent. In 1919, the Indian Historical Records Commission was appointed with a view to stimulating original research in this country and for the first time the Government committed itself unequivocally to a policy of providing suitable facilities for historical investigation in India. The Commission offered Indian scholars a convenient platform from which they could make known their needs and requirements and the Government was prepared to consider their demands with sympathy. The rules regulating access to the Central archives were amended from time to time in accordance with the Commission's recommendation and the provincial governments usually followed suit. In 1939, the Government of India threw open all official records from the earliest time to 1880 to *bonâ fide* research students. The facilities thus made available have been utilized by research students from many parts of India and the number of scholars working in the Imperial Record Department rose from 3 in 1921 to 49

in 1942. We find among them not only students of history and economics but students of languages, political institutions and different branches of science as well. For their convenience the Government of India has permitted the Imperial Record Department to prepare exhaustive indexes of the unpublished pre-Mutiny Records on scientific lines, but we should not be surprised if fresh facilities are demanded now and more is expected after the conclusion of the war.

2. In 1939, a resolution was tabled (pages 8-10, Part III, *I.H.R.C. Progs.*, Vol. XVI) by the late Principal Balkrishna at the Calcutta Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission requesting the Government of India to secure transcripts of all historical manuscripts relating to India now available in foreign countries. A small sub-committee was appointed to consider this suggestion but it was of opinion that nothing could be done to implement the resolution during the pendency of the war. Now that the war is perceptibly drawing to a close the Research and Publication Committee at its fourth meeting held at New Delhi on the 3rd March 1944 re-opened the question from a wider point of view—*viz.*, the post-war reconstruction of archives in India with particular reference to the Imperial Record Department. Its recommendations fall under three main categories :—

(1) Manuscript records.

(2) Library facilities.

(3) Technical equipments.

3. There is a general consensus of opinion that the Imperial Record Department should greatly extend its activities with a view to affording the fullest possible facilities to Indian students for studying their country's past.

(1) *Manuscript Records*

1. The manuscript records in the custody of the Imperial Record Department start from 1748 and it is well known that some of the series are incomplete. For the earliest years there are wide gaps which can in many cases be filled by transcripts of missing documents from the India Office. In the past, attempt was made to remove this deficiency by a method of mutual exchange, but since 1922 the work has been in suspension and it cannot be resumed before peace is restored. This will be, however, comparatively speaking, a minor item in the post-war programme. Even when all the existing gaps are filled the Imperial Record Department will not be able to furnish the inquisitive student with all the sources he would like to study. The India Office, the Public Record Office and the British Museum have a mass of relevant manuscript materials without which his study cannot in any sense be complete. Besides there are scattered all over Great Britain and Ireland the private correspondence and family papers of those eminent

servants of the East India Company who took a leading part in shaping the history of this country. The official records in India and England must be supplemented by such semi-official and non-official sources. Nor can a serious student ignore those foreign sources which give the French, Portuguese or Dutch version of an incident. If the Indian student has to avoid an expensive journey to lands beyond the seas and if he is to make the maximum use of his time and energy, transcripts of these foreign records should also be available at a central place in India, *i.e.*, the Imperial Record Department.

2. Besides the official and private archives in the British Isles which, to the best of our knowledge, are fairly well preserved, there must be lying unnoticed and uncared for a huge mass of records in India which when unearthed may throw considerable light on the country's past. Some historical manuscripts were in the past taken by non-Indian scholars and collectors out of the country. It is also necessary to prevent further export of such materials.

3. To provide the Indian research students with all the unpublished sources of Indian History it will therefore be necessary—

(i) to obtain copies of records from the India Office to fill the existing gaps in the Imperial Record Department records;

(ii) to obtain copies of records relating to India from the Public Record Office, London;

(iii) to obtain copies of records relating to India from the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, the Royal Asiatic Society of England and similar institutions;

(iv) to obtain copies of such contemporary correspondence and family papers in private custody in the British Isles as may throw light on Indian History;

(v) to obtain copies of records relating to India in the European countries and the United States of America;

(vi) to unearth records in private custody in India;

(vii) to prevent export of historical materials outside this country.

4. Before entering into a detailed discussion as to the ways and means of securing the above-mentioned end it is necessary to define the scope of this work. Only records of the Government of India have been so far entrusted to the custody and care of the Imperial Record Department. The Indian Historical Records Commission is professedly interested in the British period of Indian History though papers on other periods have also been read at its public meetings. The Archaeological Survey on the other hand has the care of ancient and medieval monuments as its special domain. Should our present quest therefore be limited to manuscripts relating to Indo-British History or should it be extended to manuscripts relating to earlier periods as well?

It is felt that every efforts should be made to make an exhaustive collection of manuscripts dealing with the modern period, but as Indo-British History properly speaking began with early British commercial enterprise in India we cannot therefore legitimately ignore original materials for the late 16th and 17th centuries though the country was then under Muslim and Hindu rulers. The earlier manuscripts will be, as at present, the concern of the Archaeological Survey of India. But if instead of going indiscriminately for all manuscripts, irrespective of their character and origin, our immediate objective is limited to records alone the task of collecting all the available materials for modern Indian History may not be so stupendous as it may at first sight appear. When the present programme is carried out attempt may reasonably be made for securing copies of such manuscripts as cannot be technically termed as record, *e.g.*, chronicles, narratives, etc.

5. It may be mentioned in this connection that the Committee's proposal to supplement our archives with copies of relevant records from other countries is not without a precedent. The India Office deputed the late Mr F. C. Danvers to examine the archives of Portugal and Holland and to secure transcripts of the more important Portuguese and Dutch records relating to India. Danvers' Selections now form an important part of the records in the custody of the India Office and several Indian students have drawn upon these valuable sources. In more recent years a Dutch scholar made a survey of the Dutch colonial records available in oriental countries, India among others, and the results of his labours have been embodied in a handy volume. When the treasures of the Tun Huang Library were discovered from their sand-buried depository the Chinese Government did not get timely notice of the find and many manuscripts were acquired by England, Japan, U.S.A. and other progressive countries. But China promptly put an embargo on the export of the remaining manuscripts and arranged to secure microfilm copies of the manuscripts already exported. The Committee's scheme, however, is more ambitious as it felt that every effort should be made to make available in India all records that relate to her.

6. Recent progress in microphotography has considerably minimised the difficulties and expenses which such a project would have involved thirty years ago. The needed records can be microfilmed with the greatest possible expedition and when the work is done on a large scale under favourable conditions the cost may be reduced to incredibly low figures. Mr Hilary Jenkinson suggests "two-thirds of 1*d*. per shot as a fair average." The problem of storage and cataloguing of microfilms have been carefully gone into both in England and U.S.A. While microphotography will secure all-round economy of time, storing

space and expenditure it is recognised that a film copy can only be read with a projector in a specially equipped reading room. But the student will prefer this comparative inconvenience to the indefinite delay which any other method of duplication will necessarily cause.

7. The scheme, so far as records in England are concerned, will not be very difficult to execute. Except for the unexplored family archives it is more or less precisely known where to go for records about India and which records are to be microphotographed. During the war a large number of manuscripts and printed works have been microfilmed, thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation, and the necessary technical knowledge and experience are abundantly available. But some of the continental archives may offer considerable difficulties. France, Portugal and Holland have rich collections of Indian records. Denmark played but a minor part in Indian History but Danish records on India, if still extant in any number, cannot be ignored. The same remark applies to the records of the short-lived Ostend Company. When the Crowns of Spain and Portugal were united some of the Luso-Indian records found their way to Spain. Nearer home the archives of the French and the Portuguese India and the Dutch East Indies will also have to be explored. It is not known how the French and Dutch archives have fared during the war, but in the pre-war days the main bulk of records relating to India was available at Paris in the Archive Nationale, Archive Coloniale and Bibliotheque Nationale, etc. Some of the most important Dutch records were available in print and the rest were preserved mainly at the Hague. It may be reasonably expected that what survives the ravages of war will be as before available at their previous depositories. The Portuguese records have not, so far as is known, suffered from the consequences of war and will be found at one centre, *viz.*, Lisbon, as the valuable manuscripts formerly in the Public Library of Evora have also been removed there. But whereas up-to-date microfilming appliances may, when the Committee's recommendation is implemented, be available at Paris and the Hague, it is doubtful whether Lisbon can supply the latest scientific apparatus for duplicating manuscript records. The Portuguese archives, moreover, are not so well organised as the French and the Dutch Record Offices used to be before the war and the scrutiny of Indian records in Portugal may cost more time and labour than elsewhere. Only a few records of any value may have gone to U.S.A. American catalogues and handbooks are ordinarily so exhaustive that it should not be difficult to spot them.

8. Records in India have long been sadly neglected. Few provinces have well organised record offices with whole-time officers at their head. The district record rooms often furnish models of what they should not

be. It is not therefore surprising that records in private custody should decay and deteriorate from lack of care. The value of old manuscripts particularly in rural areas is seldom recognised and they are sometimes reconverted into pulp. To rescue such old manuscripts from their inevitable doom extensive propaganda will, in the first instance, be necessary. Nothing effective can be achieved until the confidence of the owners is won and their suspicion removed. The Indian Historical Records Commission has already emphasised the need of instituting an India-wide survey (Resolution V of the Mysore Session in 1942), but the provinces with one exception found the present time inopportune. When the resolution is implemented and the co-operation of the owners enlisted it may be necessary for the provincial and central record offices to take custody and provide for the renovation of huge masses of brittle records. Here British and American analogies may be of service to India. Some of the better organised record offices may be authorised like the Public Record Office of London to take charge of family papers and other manuscripts when the owners are willing to transfer their custody. For this as well as for preventing unwarranted destruction of records legislation on the British lines will be necessary. The Indian Historical Records Commission has already urged upon the Government of India the need for such legislation (Resolution VIII of the Patna Session, 1930, and Resolution VII of the Trivandrum Session, 1942). It may also be necessary to make the technical services of the government record offices available to private owners for the repair and renovation of the old manuscripts in their possession and as Resolution XVII of the Mysore Session, 1942, shows, the Indian Historical Records Commission is of opinion that smaller record offices in British India and the States unable to go for costly scientific apparatus should ordinarily be entitled to such services as better-equipped record offices, the Imperial Record Department in particular, may be able to render.

9. While the Committee was of opinion that its present programme of acquisition should be limited to records relating to the modern period only, it was emphatically held that no such restriction should be put on the regional survey programme. Attempt should be made to bring to the notice of the interested public all and every manuscript discovered by the survey committees and learned societies should be encouraged to take charge of manuscripts of non-historical character if the owners are willing to part with them. But record offices should be competent to acquire either by purchase or as a free gift all historical documents including manuscripts dealing with the ancient and medieval periods as they are better equipped to provide for their preservation.

10. Further migration of manuscripts is easy to prevent and here a simple preventive law and a little vigilance on the part of the port and customs authorities will suffice.

11. Under the first head the Research and Publication Committee's recommendations are as follows :—

(i) Microfilm copies of all unpublished records relating to modern Indian History not available in this country should be obtained and preserved in the Imperial Record Department.

(ii) All necessary steps should be taken for salvaging privately-owned manuscripts in India. The central and provincial record offices should be legally authorised to take charge of such manuscripts when their respective owners are willing to transfer their custody on such terms as may be mutually agreed upon. Such owners as may be prepared to provide for the better preservation of their manuscripts should be given such technical advice and service as they may require.

(iii) Unwarranted destruction and export of historical manuscripts should be legally prohibited.

(2) *Library Facilities*

1. Printed books belong to a different category from manuscript records but to the research student they are equally indispensable. He must inform himself about the ground already covered and he must constantly refer to previous workers. Theoretically a printed book is the property of the public at large and he who can pay for it is able to read any book he likes. But unfortunately books go out of print and rare publications cannot sometimes be had for love or money. A student working in a record office must, therefore, have a good reference library at hand if he is to make the maximum use of his time, but the facilities that Delhi at present affords in this respect are hopelessly inadequate. Even for the routine work of the Imperial Record Department rare books have to be requisitioned from the Imperial Library of Calcutta. If the number of research students has increased thirteen times during the last twenty-one years their number will go higher and higher after the war as the Sargent Scheme of education is implemented. If we expect from our research scholars the same standard of work as prevails in western countries, we must obviously create the same environments and offer the same facilities. There is no library in India that will stand comparison with the Bodleian, the British Museum and the Bibliotheque Nationale. In this respect even Spain and Portugal are far ahead of India and the leeway cannot be made up by purchase alone even if the country is prepared to strain its financial resources to the utmost limit. Of many rare books and pamphlets only two or

three copies are known to have survived and if they are in the custody of any public institution, acquisition by any means is out of the question. But microphotographic copies of the rarest publications can be obtained and multiplied *ad infinitum* at a nominal cost and any student will prefer the inconvenience of reading through a projector to a long and expensive journey to London, Paris, Berlin or Washington.

2. The Research and Publication Committee thought that in acquiring microphotographic copies of rare publications our selection should not be confined to books bearing on the modern period only and the microfilm of publications relating to previous periods need not be handed over to the department or departments immediately interested in them. In the Committee's opinion it will be more economic to keep all microphotographic materials collected under this scheme in the custody of the Imperial Record Department. At present no administrative department or library in India has a technical staff competent to catalogue, classify and store microfilms of manuscripts and printed works. The Imperial Record Department will in any case have to look after the microphotographic copies of records secured from other countries and it may as well be entrusted with the custody and care of the entire stock of films acquired by the Government of India. Concentration in this respect will not only lead to greater economy but will guarantee speedy and inexpensive service and supply.

3. It is presumed that locally-made copies of microfilms of records and rare publications will be supplied at a fair price not only to the universities, learned societies and public libraries of India but to private individuals as well. The Imperial Record Department has already purchased an up-to-date microstat machine capable, in theory, of 1,000 shots per hour. In practice, however, allowance will have to be made for the time required for supplying and removing the original manuscripts. If another machine specially designed for microfilming pages of bound volumes is acquired the Imperial Record Department should be in a position to meet outside demands after doing its scheduled routine work. The Department will in any case need its air-conditioned storage rooms and microfilming laboratory and these may be suitably expanded for the extra work that the custody of microphotographic copies of rare publications on India will necessitate. The Committee does not propose to go into the question of expansion of the Imperial Record Department Library, the need of which is generally admitted and expects that it will be departmentally dealt with as no new principle is involved.

4. The Research and Publication Committee's recommendations are as follows :—

(i) Microphotographic copies of all rare publications on India not available in this country should be obtained irrespective

of the period they deal with and placed in the custody of the Imperial Record Department.

(ii) All *bonâ fide* students should have access to these copies.

(iii) The Imperial Record Department should supply at a reasonable price copies made out of the microfilms mentioned above to universities, learned societies, public libraries and such persons as may apply for them.

(3) *Technical Equipments and Training*

1. If the Imperial Record Department is to function efficiently as a central record office and depository of microphotographs and to serve the cause of historical research in India in the manner indicated above, its technical services will have to be mechanised and human labour in its preservation branch should be replaced as far as practicable by machine. The official records, in the custody of the Imperial Record Department occupy at present a running shelf space of more than nine miles. If the bundles are kept horizontally on the shelves, as the Director of Archives proposes to do, greater shelf space will necessarily be required. The present rate of accession of new records is about 750 bundles and 600 volumes per annum. The influx of records during the first few years of peace may conceivably be much larger. The Imperial Record Department is further expected to take charge of a fair percentage of old manuscripts salvaged by the regional survey committees and most, if not all, of the manuscripts so brought to light will need thorough doctoring. Of the present stock of records under the care of the Department over 25 per cent. need renovation and over 60 per cent. stand in need of minor repairs. Moreover, there are about 4,300 bundles of folded records covering about 4,280,000 folio pages, which will have to be flattened and repaired. Lack of sufficient repairing materials leaves no alternative but to expedite flattening and postpone all repair and binding work, except the most urgent, during the pendency of the war. The Department will therefore be faced with accumulated arrears in this respect when the war comes to a close. It is precisely then that the smaller record offices are likely to requisition the services of its technical staff. The Committee is glad to learn that the Government of India is not unaware of the necessity of reinforcing the staff of trained menders with the requisite machinery and but for the present war the process of mechanisation would have made notable progress if not altogether completed. The Committee therefore deems it unnecessary to examine in detail the proposals now under the consideration of the Government of India.

2. If the technical staff of the Imperial Record Department is to assume new responsibilities it logically follows that it should be relieved,

to some extent, from the present volume of work which falls mainly under the head—preservation. It has been abundantly proved that the climate of Delhi does not normally offer optimum conditions for preserving old and brittle papers. The following figures show the wide variation of temperature and relative humidity which cannot but adversely affect the longevity of papers :—

Year.	Temp. in Fahrenheit.				Relative Humidity.			
	Ground Floor.		Second Floor.		Ground Floor.		Second Floor.	
	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.
1940 .	97°.0	61°.6	103°.0	50°.5	83%	9%	80%	13%
1941 .	98°.2	61°.2	105°.0	51°.2	87%	21%	80%	15%
1942 .	100°.0	59°.0	107°.0	52°.5	85%	19%	93%	17%
1943 .	100°.0	58°.5	107°.0	55°.0	100%	16%	97%	15%

There is only one way of combating this natural disadvantage, *viz.*, air-conditioning of the muniment rooms to secure uniformity of temperature and relative humidity and to get the incoming air-current properly filtered. Air-conditioning will partly though not wholly keep the insect pests also under control. But to reduce the repairing work within practicable limits these pests will have to be completely exterminated. Not only old papers will have to be fumigated in a vacuum chamber with suitable lethal gases but new papers will have to be similarly treated before they are introduced into the muniment rooms to avoid further troubles. It is understood that a hydraulic press was ordered from the U.S.A. for laminating brittle records with cellulose acetate foil but it could not be imported on account of the prevailing war conditions. The maximum service from the laminating machine however cannot be obtained unless a constant supply of flattened records can be arranged. At present folded records are flattened with ordinary hand presses and the daily outturn is about 500 sheets. The average output can be considerably increased if electrical ironers are used.

3. The Committee visited the small laboratory attached to the Imperial Record Department. At present it is the only place in India where problems of preserving old papers and other cognate subjects are investigated. Despite its limited resources the laboratory has done

good work but it cannot play its legitimate part in the post-war organisation of record offices unless it is vastly expanded.

4. Lastly, the Committee observes that a large number of trained archivists will be needed when each of the eleven Governor's provinces in British India and the leading Indian States will put their record offices on a proper basis as they are expected to do after the war. In anticipation of this demand the Imperial Record Department has already formulated a training scheme and with the approval of the Government of India has been imparting instructions in the theory and practice of archives-keeping to suitable persons deputed by the provincial governments, universities and Indian States. Though only a few students have so far come for the complete course, the Committee feels that the newly-offered training facilities should not be restricted but if possible the training classes should form a permanent feature of the normal activities of the Imperial Record Department and in due course be developed into a regular school. Meanwhile the Government of India will be well advised to encourage students to come in larger number for the full course of training by awarding suitable stipends and scholarships.

5. The Committee recommends :—

(i) Early steps should be taken to air-condition the muniment rooms of the Imperial Record Department with a view to securing uniformity of temperature and relative humidity.

(ii) Vacuum fumigatorium and laminating machines should be installed in the Imperial Record Department at an early date.

(iii) Imparting instructions in theory and practice of archives-keeping should be recognised as one of the normal duties of the Imperial Record Department.

(4) *Financial Implications*

1. The Committee feels that it should briefly indicate the financial implications of its recommendations. Though the Committee realises that the expansion of its activities will demand a corresponding addition to the Imperial Record Department staff and the installation of the microstat, vacuum fumigatorium and laminating machine will involve additional recurring expenditure, which may or may not be offset by a proportional reduction in the staff, it is of opinion that these are details of administrative character which should be dealt with by the appropriate department or departments of the Government of India. If the Committee's recommendations are accepted provision will have to be made for purchase of such privately-owned records as may be offered for sale. Unless necessary steps are taken for preservation and purchase of manuscripts unearthed by the regional survey committees its main

object will be defeated. While some owners may volunteer to place their manuscripts in the custody of the central or provincial record offices, others may not be prepared to part with them except for a money consideration. In certain cases the prospects of a fair price may induce the poorer owners to shake off their secretive inclinations. In the opinion of the Committee a minimum sum of Rs. 10,000 per annum should be placed at the disposal of the Director of Archives of the Government of India and similar grants should be made by the provincial governments to their offices. A part of the provincial grant may be utilised for the touring expenses of the survey committee and the remainder may be devoted to the purchase and preservation of old manuscripts.

2. An officer will have to be deputed to European countries and U.S.A. to secure microphotographs of records and other relevant manuscripts. In some cases he may be able to select his material from a catalogue or handbook but in many cases he will have to grope through a mass of manuscripts before he can find the correspondence or note that he would like to include in his collection. Bussy's Indian correspondence is, for instance, scattered through fifty manuscript volumes which contain other matters not directly bearing on India. The officer will need the minimum period of three years to finish his work and the expense of his mission will approximately be Rs. 3,00,000. It is difficult to estimate accurately before the war concludes the number of pages that will have to be microphotographed. At present the catalogues of French, Dutch and Danish archives are not available in India. The Portuguese records have not been properly catalogued at all. If a sum of Rs. 84,000 is set apart as the pay and travelling expenses of the officer for three years Rs. 2,16,000 will be available for the operational expenses. According to Mr Jenkinson's estimate 54 shots will cost a rupee. Making allowances for all contingencies our cost can be reasonably estimated at 40 pages per rupee. It will, therefore, be possible to microphotograph 8,000,000 pages at the total cost of Rs. 2,00,000. But actually some deduction may have to be made for countries like Portugal where microphotographic facilities may not be available and where the more expensive method of transcription will have to be adopted, the extra cost for which is expected to be covered by the remaining sum of Rs. 16,000.

3. It is easier to give a more accurate estimate for the machinery required. Considering that the price and the freight will not materially vary in the years immediately after the war the cost of the apparatus will be as follows, leaving out of account the expenditure of the additional accommodation necessary for the machinery, men and new accessions—

	Rs.
Air-conditioning	2,50,000
Laminating machine	40,000
Vacuum fumigatorium	25,000
Air cleaning unit	500
Boilers, etc.	20,000
10 Microfilm readers	5,000
Another microfilm apparatus for bound volumes	20,000
Laboratory	10,000
Library	10,000

4. Briefly the reorganisation of the Central Record Office as outlined in the Committee's report will need a capital expenditure of Rs. 7,00,000 in round figures. This cannot be regarded as too high or extravagant a price for an up-to-date Central Record Office in India with the latest equipment affording the research students all the facilities that they may require. When the Committee's recommendations are fully implemented students of Indian History will no longer have any reasonable excuse for going abroad in search of their materials except in rare cases where careful examination of the original itself is necessary. The money spent from the central revenue, therefore, will effect a corresponding saving in India's expenditure abroad, an end desirable in itself but which gains still more in importance when it is noted that this will in all likelihood save a fairly large number of Indian students from going adrift from their social and cultural moorings at an impressionable age. In conclusion the Committee observes that besides a capital grant of Rs. 7,00,000 and a recurring grant of Rs. 10,000 the Government will have to meet further expenditure for expanded accommodation and additional staff an estimate for which should be called for from the Department concerned.

JOHN SARGENT,
Chairman

Members

D. V. POTDAR
MOHAMMAD HABIB
C. S. SRINIVASACHARI
R. C. MAJUMDAR
G. L. CHOPRA
M. NASIRUDDIN KHAN
BISHESHWAR NATH REU
BISHESHWAR PRASAD

Members—contd.

K. K. DATTA
H. N. SINHA
S. M. JAFFAR
D. N. BANERJEE
J. C. TALUQDAR
I. H. QURESHI
T. G. P. SPEAR

S. N. SEN,
Secretary

Additional suggestions offered by the Signatories on the Report

1. *Dr R. C. Majumdar.*—I would suggest the addition of the words "Universities and learned societies like the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal" after "Archaeological Survey of India" on page 114, line 7.

2. *Prof. D. V. Potdar.*—In Italy, Venice and also in India a vast mass of records dealing with India are reported to be available with the Catholic Missions. The Madura Mission papers are also well known for instance. At Venice a friend reported to me years ago a large mass of reports from Catholic Missionaries and others who had been in India too are lying in heaps.

I suggest that these also be included for scrutiny and microfilming in our scheme.

The Vatican, also, should not be forgotten.

3. *Rao Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachari.*—(1) While the proposal to collect original materials for the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as being necessary for an understanding of early British commercial enterprise in the fullest sense is to be welcomed, liberty is taken to suggest an extension of our activity to the collection of every kind of relevant material, bearing on the history of Portuguese enterprise as well, for which source material may have to be scoured from the last quarter of the fifteenth century. European enterprise in India from its earliest manifestation can be justifiably brought under the academic jurisdiction of the Historical Records Commission.

(2) The acquisition of microphotographic copies of rare books and pamphlets would be very welcome as they would serve particularly the needs of scholars living at a distance from the central record office. The microfilm of publications relating to previous periods is also bound to be fruitful in its use to a number of historical scholars.

(3) I should also suggest that a definite course of instruction to scholars working at the record office, lasting for about two or three weeks and bearing on the usefulness of the resources available and the most efficient methods of their utilisation at the Imperial Record Department by some competent scholar, under the general direction and guidance of the Director of Archives, may be given. For this purpose, the employment in the permanent service of the Department of a person with an intensive knowledge of modern history and of all its sources may be necessary. I commend this suggestion to the Director, particularly as the guidance and direction of scholars working in the Imperial Record Department is bound to expand both extensively and intensively in the post-war period.

4. *Dr H. N. Sinha.*—I agree with the above.

5. *Dr K. K. Datta.*—I suggest the addition of the sentence " provinces having no central record offices of their own should establish them in their respective areas as soon as possible on the termination of the present war " after " to do after the war " in line 6 on page 121.

6. *Mr D. N. Banerjee.*—There is a faint recollection in my mind—I may be wrong—that we discussed in some detail both the questions of the desirability and the practicability of a greater co-operation and co-ordination, in the interest of research scholars, between the Imperial Record Department and the provincial (and State) record offices in India. For instance, it was discussed whether some system could not be devised in the post-war period under which a research scholar working, say, in the Imperial Record Department and without having, ordinarily, to move from place to place, might not have access to microfilmed or micro-photographed copies of records in the provincial (or State) record offices, which he might require for his researches. There was, as far as I remember, some discussion on these lines; but I do not remember if any definite decision was reached. However, I have felt that attention should be drawn to this.

7. *Mr S. M. Jaffar.*—Apropos of paragraph 4 under Section (1) I would like to add that manuscripts (especially of correspondence) of historical importance. relating to the pre-British period when India was under Hindu and Muslim rulers, in addition to those relating exclusively to the British period, ought to be the concern of the Imperial Record Department and provincial record offices. If India's past is to be explored and illuminated the records relating to the earlier period should not be ignored.

APPENDIX H

Keepers of Records of the Government of India.

Name of Officer-in-Charge.	Period of Office.	Remarks.
1. G. W. Forrest . .	11 March 1891 to 8 November 1900.	A. T. Pringle officiated from 20 March 1895 to October 1898.
2. S. C. Hill . . .	8 March 1899 to 8 November 1900 (offg.).	....
	8 November 1900 to 18 March 1902.	....
3. C. R. Wilson (offg.) .	18 March 1902 to 24 May 1904.	J. Macfarlane officiated from 14 May 1903 to 26 October 1903.
4. E. D. Ross (offg.) .	25 May 1904 to 27 June 1904	...
5. N. L. Hallward (offg.) .	28 June 1904 to 6 May 1905	...
6. H. G. Graves (offg.) .	7 May 1905 to 24 May 1905	...
7. J. Macfarlane (offg.) .	25 May 1905 to 31 October 1905.	...
8. E. D. Ross	1 November 1905 to 27 January 1906 (offg.).	....
	28 January 1906 to 25 February 1914.	H. Claughton officiated from 13 February 1907 to 7 February 1908 and from 14 February 1909 to 13 August 1909. R. H. Blaker carried on current duties from 1 March 1912 to 16 November 1912. A. F. Scholfield officiated from 16 November 1912 to 4 May 1913.
9. A. F. Scholfield . .	26 February 1914 to 20 June 1919.	H. G. Graves officiated from 30 June 1916 to 11 October 1916.

APPENDIX H—*contd.*

Keepers of Records of the Government of India—contd.

Name of Officer-in-Charge.	Period of Office.	Remarks.
10. R. H. Blaker . .	21 June 1919 to 23 September 1920.	K. K. Datta carried on the current duties from 23 September 1920 to 25 November 1920.
11. J. M. Mitra . .	26 November 1920 to 29 January 1922.	K. Bose carried on the current duties from 30 January 1922 to 31 March 1922.
12. A. F. M. Abdul Ali .	1 April 1922 to 1 December 1938.	C. Singer officiated for seven months from 1 February 1938.
13. C. Singer (offg.) . .	1 December 1938 to 11 June 1939.	....
14. S. N. Sen . . .	12 June 1939	....

APPENDIX I

Present staff of the National Archives of India (1 October, 1948)

Director of Archives

Surendranath Sen, M.A., B. Litt. (Oxon.), Ph.D., D. Litt.

Assistant Director of Archives

Purnendu Basu, M.A., Ll.B., Ph.D. (Lond.).

Senior Superintendent

Sourindranath Roy, M.A.

Archival Chemist

Sunil Kumar Chakravorti, M.Sc.

Assistant Archival Chemist

Sumer Chand Jain, M.Sc.

Junior Chemist

Paresh Chandra Majumdar, B.Sc.

Laboratory Assistant

Manindranath Datta, B.Sc.

Mechanics

Jagbandan Lal Bhatnagar.
Buddhi Ram Dhoundiyal, M.E.E.

Operators

Shyam Sundar Auddy.
Sobha Bose, B.Sc.

Editors

Sudhir Chandra Gupta, M.A., B.L.
Krishna Dayal Bhargava, M.A.
Nirmal Chandra Sinha, M.A., P.R.S.

APPENDIX I—*contd.*

Senior Technical Assistants

Upendranath Sarkar, M.A.
Sri Krishna Saxena, M.A.
Yadav Chandra Gaur, M.A.
Hari Ram Gupta, M.A., B.T., Ph.D., D.Litt.
Vijoy Chandra Joshi, M.A.
Dasharatha Sharma, M.A., D.Litt.

Maulvi

Dayanand Lakhmichand Kaka, M.A.

Junior Technical Assistants

Baidyanath Banerjee, B.A.
Bhupal Chandra Mukherjee, B.A.
Sailendranath Ghosh.
Bhawani Dass, B.A.
Ajit Kumar Sarkar, B.Com.
Krishna Das Gupta, M.A.
Ram Lal Nanda, M.A.
Pulin Behari Das.
Keshab Lal Kanjilal. B.A.
Bertram Saint John Dias.
Keshab Chandra Ghosh.
Satish Chandra Kaushik.
Mahima Ranjan Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.L.
Satya Ranjan Mitra, M.A.
Iswaranand Verma, M.A.
Dhanwanti Gopaldas Keswani, M.A., B.T.
Dayal Dass, M.A.
Jati Ram Gupta, M.A., Munshi Fazil.
Romesh Chandra Suri, M.A.
Sailendranath Sen, B.A.
Radha Krishan Parmu, M.A., D.Phil.
Mrs. Arati Biswas, M.A. B.T.
Manohar Lal Gaind, M.A., J.D.

Librarian

Subodh Chandra Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., Dip. Lib.

APPENDIX I—*concld.*

Assistant Librarian

Bibhuti Bhusan Bagchi.

Junior Superintendent

Deva Prasad Das Gupta, M.A.

Clerks

Apurba Krishna Chakraborti.
Charan Saran.
Biswanath Das Gupta.
Qazi Mohammad Yasin Alam Qamar.
Barru Ram Sharma.
Ramesh Chandra Majumdar.
Nathu Ram Sharma.
Ajit Kumar Mitra.
Chitta Ranjan Mitra.
Sudhir Chandra Datta.
Hasrajmal Atmaram Kanuga.
Jitendra Nath Das.
Devapriti Datta.
Tarlochan Singh.
Hassanand.

Typists.

Narayan Chandra Chakraborty.
Lachhman Dass Ajmani.
Belin Kumar Chanda.

Proof Reader

Manik Ratan Sen Gupta, B.A.

Copyholder

Balai Chandra Chakraborty.

Checkers, Sorters, Senior Menders, Oilman and Laboratory Attendants.

Probodh Chandra Dey; Hazari Lal; Paritosh Chakraborty; Bijoy Chandra Ghose; Gokul Chandra Datta; Sudhindra Bhusan Ghose; Syed Wasi Haider; Hongseshwar Ghose; Naba Kumar Nayak; Khosal Singh Rawat; Mahammad Ahia; Baidyanath Dutta; Dwarakanath Biswas; Anil Chandra Das; Paritosh Kumar Das; Kedarnath Paul; Jaidutt Pande; Amulya Chandra Ghose; Dulal Chandra Mookherjee; Anil Kumar Mitra; Barindra Kumar Sen Gupta; Niranjan Singh; Baldev Raj Ajmani; Premananda Paul; Matilal Malhotra; Girija Dutt Bhat; Gorokh Nath; Tarun Kumar Ghose; Anil Baran Roy.

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Peons, Dusting bearers, Armed guards, Night watchmen and Darwans

Hussaini; Bakar Ali; Kanai Ram; Jhulan Ram; Lachman Ram; Hashmatullah Khan; Shib Charan; Loke Nath; Jawhar Singh; Sambhu Nath; Chittaranjan Das; Amir Ali; Mafizuddin; Gulab Khan; Ibrahim; Dalloo Ram; Chaturi Ram; Hatti Singh; Gaya Ram; Sundar Lal; Kharak Singh; Sardari Lal; Jaswant Rai; Debi Chand; Behari Lal; Topan Ram; Ram Nagina; Mohan Lal Sharma; Phani Bhusan Bag; Gwahar Ali; Ridh Ram; Jalaluddin; Ram Chandra; Mukhtear; Jagdish Sharma; Balam Singh; Nuruddin; Banwari Lal; Guru Prasad; Kanchan; Triloki Nath Singh; Duli Chand; Ram Singh; Mir Singh; Gurpal Singh; Kansi Ram; Laka; Prabhati; Gyarsa; Dulia; Munna.

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